

Mysterious stone piles in Altai Mountains in Xinjiang.

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Photographer Yang Bo, a 'wolf' 'donkey' and 'mule' on the road.

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The world's only panda acrobat to perform at Chaoyang Gymnasium today.

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Hail to the Chiefs

By Zhao Hongyi

US President George W Bush was scheduled to attend the ninth APEC Summit in Shanghai yesterday. Secretary of State Colin Powell had already arrived on Wednesday night.

Thousands of reporters applied for approval to cover Bush's arrival at Pudong Airport, but only 39 were permitted. Reporters joked with each other saying that from all the new faces appearing at each APEC Summit, one can interpret political changes that occurred around the world.

Airforce One was scheduled to land at the airport at presstime yesterday. This is the first time Bush has visited China, the first time he has attended the APEC Summit and the first time he has met Chinese leaders.

Singapore Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong arrived first yesterday, then President Kim Dae Jun from South Korea. Then Russian President Vladimir Putin arrived. This is Putin's second visit to Shanghai. In May this year, Putin visited Shanghai and attended the "Shanghai 5 Summit". The last scheduled arriving guest was Helen Clark, Prime Minister of New Zealand.

Foreign ministers attending the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Ministerial Meeting here Thursday reached a consensus on anti-terrorism during their working breakfast hosted by Chinese Foreign Minister Tang Jiaxuan.

Loyal Soldier Dies at 101



ZHANG XUELIANG
Xinhua photo

The Nationalist general who in 1936 famously risked it all to unite China against the Japanese, died in Hawaii, USA on Sunday. He was 101.

Acknowledging a "great patriot," the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) sent a message of condolences on Monday to the family members of Zhang Xueliang (Chang Hsueh-liang), who died in Honolulu on Sunday at 8:50 pm local time.

Zhang, the message read, made historic contributions to "ending the 10-year (1927-1937) civil war, helping realize the second cooperation between the Kuomintang and the CPC, and making the whole nation take part in the war of resistance against Japanese aggression."

On December 12, 1936, Zhang, then a general of the Kuomintang (Nationalist) army, kidnapped his own leader, Chiang Kai-shek, and forced him to negotiate with Communist leaders in the northwestern city of Xi'an. During the "Xi'an Incident," Zhang demanded Chiang to cease the civil war and unite with the Communist Party to fight the Japanese.

But Zhang paid a price for his patriotism. According to documentary records, Zhang was held under house arrest by the Kuomintang regime after the Xi'an Incident, then when the regime fled to Taiwan in 1949, he was taken to the island province. On December 15, 1993, Zhang was permitted to leave Taiwan and visit relatives in the United States. In 1995, he settled in Hawaii.

Zhang had been hospitalized for 10 days. Chinese diplomats at the consulate general in Los Angeles visited him during his hospitalization.

"The Chinese people will always cherish the memory of Zhang," the CPPCC message read. (Xinhua)



Photo by Cheng Tieliang

EDITOR: LIU FENG DESIGNER: PANG LEI



Photo by Chen Shuyi



Photo by Fan Jiwen

Construction is scheduled to begin here in Zhongguancun west zone.

By Yang Xiao

When Beijingers picked up their morning papers on Tuesday this week, they might have noticed an unusually large ad by Zhongguancun Science Park Advisory Committee inviting bids to build in the west zone of the park.

The invitation is part of a program that aims to curb escalating real estate prices in Zhongguancun. As the area boasts a wealth of capital and skilled employees already, space for development is limited and prices are growing more competitive.

But Zhongguancun start-ups still need cheap offices. Rent in some high-class office buildings is 8-10 yuan per square meter per day; and mid-class is 4-7 yuan. Even cheap offices cost 3 yuan. Most companies say they can not afford such high prices. Buying residential accommodation is also ex-

pensive. A normal standard house averages 7,672-yuan per square meter. Luxury apartment costs 10,900 yuan per square meter.

A Beijing Zhongguancun IT Professionals Association survey found 66% of 416 Zhongguancun companies have moved out or partly moved out of Zhongguancun.

Capitalnet.com.cn set up its office in the Beijing Telecom Building. "We have some offices at Zhongguancun," marketing executive Zhang Guang told *Beijing Today*. "Maybe due to the price, we set up our management team and products department outside."

Li Jinyu returned from the USA this year and moved her Internet software company to the CITIC International Building in the Central Business District (CBD). "I must save expenditure," she said. "Zhongguancun is far away from downtown. I have to cover my employees' commuting fees. And the

price is no cheaper than the CBD, so I chose here."

What has made Zhongguancun so expensive? "Nowadays a lot of IT distribution and retail enterprises have moved out," says *China Internet Weekly* Chief Editor Hu Yanping. "But the Fortune 500 multinational companies have not yet moved in. Many set up their offices in Chaoyang CBD, and their R&D bases went to Yizhuang, Beijing Economic-Technological Development Area. Frankly, Zhongguancun's traffic situation and basic construction needs to improve."

Facing an exodus, an advisory committee vice director suggests the outspoken Hu exaggerates his case.

"Personally," says Zhang Guilin, "I think Zhongguancun not only attracts Fortune 500, but also small and medium-sized companies."

The government has introduced measures to counter rising prices:

★Controlling land development;

★Supporting small companies through mortgages and rent discounts;

★Retaining land for cheap buildings or IT markets.

"The government," says Hu, "cannot control the speed or direction of the development. Zhongguancun has its characteristics. It is an IT retail and distribution market."

"To build high-class office buildings and R&D bases will certainly tie up that space. Zhongguancun's small and medium-sized enterprises will get squeezed out."

"And the result is high cost projects taking the place of low ones."

"In making luxury buildings or curbing prices, the government's opinions are both sound, but in fact the government has no right to intervene in this transformation, which is mostly market-led."

Wanted: Singers

Chinese *Turandot* to audition performers

mind her of the importance of human warmth.

The opera will contain a strong Chinese flavor, said Jing, with traditional dancing and music introduced into the performance. The scenery will be modeled on old Beijing, with shops, sedan chairs and red lanterns. Costumes will be based on Peking Opera.

This is the second joint venture *Turandot* in China, featuring foreign investors from the USA and Chinese performers. The first was a Florence

opera house production directed by Zhang Yimou in 1998, presented in the Imperial Ancestral Temple in Beijing and performed by foreign opera singers.

Rehearsals will begin in May 2002, and the world tour will start from Hong Kong in August 2002.

The production is the second cooperation between China National Culture & Art and Tibor Rudas, who first cooperated on the Three Tenors Forbidden City Concert in June.

Co-produced by China National

Culture & Art, Rudas Organization and China National Opera House, *Turandot* registration will conclude Wednesday October 31. Interviews will begin in the first week of November and final billing is due to be determined in early December.

Qualifications:

1. Experience of Occidental Opera performance

2. Operatic singing in fluent Italian

3. Chinese citizen under 45

Tel: 6554-3307/06/08

Civil Servants Awarded New Pay Rise

Experts Predict Higher Salaries And Consumption Will Promote Economic Growth

By Shan Jinliang

China is to increase the salaries of its civil servants, said Minister of Finance Xiang Huicheng, at an October 12 press conference of the State Council.

This salary increase, with an investment of 80 billion yuan, will benefit China's 45 million civil servants, according to a notification by the State Council. The move will enhance the salary for the average employee by 100 yuan (\$12), a monthly increase of 15% each month from this January,

says Xiang.

The policy consists of three parts: firstly, upgrading the salary of governmental employees by 100 yuan each month; secondly, implementing the allowance system in outlying districts where employees will have their salaries raised from 43 yuan to 300 yuan according to the degree of hardship of their living conditions. Thirdly, carrying out a year-end bonus system paying an equivalent of one month's salary for qualified employees.

The practice will boost consumption and prompt economic growth as a result, says Professor Wen Yueran from China People's University. He says the general salary at all levels of society will rise in 3 to 5 years after the increase of the civil servants' salary.

Statistics reveal annual economic growth from 1979 to 1997 is 9.8%, while the yearly growth of civil servants' salary is only 6.8%. The salary increase will be part of the solution in the

drive against corruption, says Jia Kang, vice director of the institute. The policy should be one way to keep intellectuals in their positions, while also attracting new talent, according to Yang Yiyong from the Human Resources and Management Research center of the People's University. Liu Shanxi, a research fellow of the Financial & Science Research Institute under the Ministry of Finance does not agree with Wen. Liu says the policy mainly deals with the low levels of civil servants' salaries. Com-

pared with many other countries and other social groups, the salary of civil servants is quite low. This consequently discourages civil servants from serving in the long-term, affects their efficiency, and may even lead to the frequent bribe and corruption scandals. Liu does concede however that the increase in salary will have a positive effect on economic expectation.

It is learned that this is the second salary increase after the April increase, and is the fifth increase since 1989.

Scientists Draw Map of Rice Genome

China's leading genetic scientist Chen Zhu announced that Chinese researchers have completed the sequencing of the hybrid rice genome on October 12. A full database of the rice genome will be released for the world's scientists to freely consult.

Chen, also vice-president of the Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS), said the working draft covers more than 90 per cent of the total DNA sequences of the "super hybrid rice," which was invented by well-known agriculturist Yuan Longping.

These latest scientific achievements have been made by the CAS Genome Research Center, the Beijing Huada Gene Research Center, and its southern base in Hangzhou, East China's Zhejiang Province.

The working draft and database of the rice genome are the first stage of China's research and development on the hybrid rice genome, which was launched in May 2000. The complete genome map of hybrid rice is expected to be finished by the end of next year.

(Xinhua)

WTO Entry Accelerates City's Legislation

By Zhang Peng/Shan Jinliang

The Standing Committee of the Beijing Municipal People's Congress is amending and perfecting the valid laws and regulations in operation to meet the need for China's upcoming WTO entry, while enacting new regulations.

Zhang Zhijian, director of the Legal Working Committee of the Standing Committee, said large-scale amendments of the regulations began last year, while 68 regulations among all the valid regulations have been amended since.

The new regulation on developing the private sector focuses on the service function of the government, for the first time allowing private enterprises to enter into foreign business, and possess the right to import under certain conditions.

Beijing's Higher Court passed a draft of the regulation on the protection of intellectual rights, ranging from the identification of patents to the judgment of exterior design patents. Wang Zhengqi, deputy director of the court, says WTO entry requires China to make more efforts to intensify the protection of intellectual rights.

Medical Sales Hit the Web

By Wang Yanyan

Sixteen health care networks, authorized by the State Drug Admission, opened their portals for online medicine business on October 11.

There are about four or five hundred health care networks in China. They can be divided into two distinct sectors, one profit making and the other non-profit making.

No network can provide medical information services for profit without the authorization of state or local drug admissions. Even those given approvals can't provide more than the permission states. Non-profit making networks are forbidden to offer compensated medical information services.

New Websites:

hn.emedchina.net
medical.swww.com.cn
yn.emedchina.net
sinomv.com
drugsky.com
365jk.com
gbinfo.com.cn
haoyisheng.com
big5.chinah.com
pharmcn.com
jl.medicine.com.cn
jl.emedchina.net
chinamedexpo.com
tcmtoday.com
emedchina.net
jztheyao.com



Busily preparing for the caesarean operation



The newly-born baby calf becomes the center of media's attention



The healthy baby calf weighs 39 kilograms



The newly-born calf takes in the new world

Photos by Shang Xiaoyu / Lu Wenjie / Qiu Min

First Cloned Calf Dies Young

By Zhao Pu

The first cloned calf in China was born in Shenzhen on October 13. But the calf unexpectedly choked to death on milk given by a feeder some 80 minutes after its birth.

Birth of the Cloned Calf

The breeding of the cloned calf began from last June, when Professor Chen Yongfu of the Chinese Agricultural University and his fellow researchers set out for New Zealand for seed selection of the embryo. The nurtured embryos were protected and taken back in liquid nitrogen.

On January 30 this year, 64 embryos were transplanted in a research base of the Shenzhen Lupeng Group. Four transplanted cows successfully became pregnant, but three of them aborted. To prevent dystocia (complicated and slow labor), a caesarean section was administered to the only remaining pregnant cow.

At 9:15am on October 13, the first cloned calf was born. When the live female calf was pulled out from her surrogate mother's uterus, all the scientists and reporters on the spot cheered. Weighing 39 kilograms, the healthy calf marked the success of the research.

Dead 80 Minutes after Birth

When all attention was focused on Prof. Chen, the chief researcher of this project, the accident happened. An urgent message was delivered from the birth site that the calf choked on milk. Revival attempts were futile, and the little creature died at 10:35am, 80 minutes after its birth.

"This is an accident", said professor Chen Yongfu, calming himself, "but this healthy calf confirms our successful cloning technique, we will make cloned cattle again."

Prof. Chen & Project 863

Prof. Chen Yongfu, chief researcher in National Key Laboratories of Agribiotechnology, Chinese Agricultural University, is a renowned expert in the field of animal biotechnology. He's been working with Chinese National High Project 863, and has made great achievements in the field of animal mammary gland bioreactor production. In 2000 his research group cloned six transgenic sheep that produce vaccine in their milk for preventing a widespread infectious disease in chicken. This cloned calf is another important part of the Project. Successful birth of the first live cloned calf in China proved that Chinese scientists have dominated the field of animal cloning technology.

The second round of cloned calf cultivation has been planned to begin next year. Researchers will go to Australia for the production of the embryos, said sources from the research group.

Sequence of Events

The mother cow lay on a piece of grass in the research base, four limbs bound up and hair on the belly shaved off.

8:45-the cow was rinsed and disinfected, sterile gauze was padded on its abdomen
8:50-local anesthetic for the cow
9:00-caesarean operation began
9:13-a back hoof first emerged from the mother's body
9:15-whole body of the calf was pulled out, black and white in color, eyes sparkling
10:30-the calf choked on milk
10:35-revival attempts were futile and the calf died

China on High Alert Against Anthrax

By Li Dan

Beijing Post Office is taking the threat of biological terrorism in the form of anthrax very seriously. All mail is being highly scrutinized, especially international letters and packages.

Foreigners have been asked to be extra vigilant with regard to all frequently received international mail. Postal workers will open envelopes and packages in front of senders in case illegal substances are found. Any suspicious powder will be tested. Besides, at airport Customs, X-ray machines and police dogs will be used to check letters and packages. Foreigners have said they trust the Post Office to do its job efficiently.

At the China National Bureau of Quality Supervision & Inspection & Quarantine, express mail and packages, not previously included due to their negligible quantity,

are now under strict inspection and quarantine control. Express mails are divided into four categories. A. Mail requiring quarantine permit certificates. B. Mail under the management of quality permit and health registering system. C. Samples, presents, goods not for sale, and private items. D. Mail not included in A, B, or C. Express mail A should be quarantined. Quarantine of B should be tight, and if without required certificates, mail should be withheld or returned. C should be quarantined if necessary and 1-3% of D mail will be tested in samples.

Foreign Minister Spokesman Sun Yuxi said on Tuesday at a routine press conference that China opposes all terrorism including bioterrorism. Sun also said that up to now, there have been no suspicious letters or packages, and no cases of anthrax infection reported in China.

Security Squads to Safeguard Civil Airplanes

By Gao Shan/Shan Jinliang

Security squads will be on board China's civil airlines to ensure the security of passengers, the Civil Aviation Administration of China (CAAC) recently revealed.

This is one of a series of measures taken by the CAAC to intensify the security of China's civil planes after the September 11 terror attacks in the US. The squad, numbering 2,000, will be come under the bureau of public security of CAAC and

will mainly deal with emergency events. China's civil airplanes are allocated with security personnel to enhance air safety. Weapons are often police batons and fire-fighting hatchets.

Other measures include banning air passengers from carrying knives onto aircraft, and only accepting luggage checked in by passengers themselves. It is calculated over 4,000 knives were confiscated within 10 days after the CAAC issued the notification on September 27.

Chinese Beauty Goes for Miss World Title

By Shan Jinliang

Li Bing, a model from Beijing, will attend this year's Miss World competition in South Africa as China's first and only representative, Sanya city deputy mayor Wu Wenxue pronounced on October 13.

At the same time, the annual Miss World competition is to set up a branch in China next year, offering an opportunity for Chinese beauties to compete with the world's best, Sanya Tourism Investment Corporation revealed recently.

The world-celebrated Miss World competition has never seen Chinese participants, as the aesthetic standard of the contest has been dominated by western views. This 'prejudice', as called by some Chinese analysts, has been abolished by one of the competition officials. The official was determined to choose Sanya, a city in Hainan province, as the branch of the competition after falling in love with the local scenery. While an official from Sanya Tourism Investment Corporation says the matter is still being discussed, but that Sanya is likely to be the winning candidate city.

(See Page 6)



Li Bing

Photo by Lucky

Chinese Photography Chip Makes Debut

By Shan Jinliang

ZC301, China's first mega silicon chip exclusively for pixels has been fully utilized by Samsung, Philips, Legend and Founder, Beijing V Micro-electronic Corporation announced last Saturday. It symbolizes China's leading role in designing and developing chips for exclusive use, analysts say.

ZC301, a single chip solution for image processing, is widely used on PC, digital cameras, net visual TV and security monitoring. Experts maintain after examining the chips that its technology has reached the level of the Intel Pentium series.

Deng Zhonghan, CEO of the corporation, revealed in a press conference, "ZC301 is only the first baby of the company's long-term plan, and the company is becoming world-leading in the development of chips for exclusive use."

The company, set up in October 1999 in Zhongguancun, invented the ZC301 and put it onto the international market in just two years. Such a swift process from conception to market launch is rarely seen, even internationally.

Deng and many of his founders were overseas Chinese students in the US, and businessmen in Silicon Valley a few years ago. Deng holds a Ph.D in electric engineering from the University of California at Berkeley.

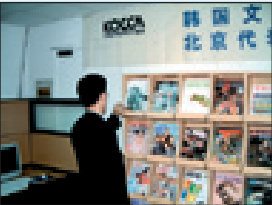


Photo by J.Y.

Korean Culture Takes on Beijing

By Yang Xiao

As more and more Korean fashion rushes into Chinese youths' lives, Korea Culture & Contents Agency (KOC-CA) opened a Beijing office at the Henderson Center last Tuesday. The office is the second one outside Korea, after the Tokyo office.

As a subsidiary foundation of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, KOCCA is an institution that will generally support the culture industry. "The culture industry is a field that our government is strategically supporting as a leading industry in the next generation. The office here will introduce outstanding Korean cultural products to China, and do studies on the Chinese culture market for Korea's enterprises," said KOCCA President Byung-Moon Suh.

Although KOCCA is a foundation organization, it has a marketing goal of realizing \$2 billion from culture products exports. As a vice-minister of Culture and Tourism put it, "The globe is converting from a manufacturing economy to a knowledge economy; therefore Korea wants to become a major export of culture, just like the US."

By Zhao Yijiang

A spokesman at Sohu.com (NASDAQ: SOHU) held a press conference in Beijing on September 29 and said that the articles published on Sina.com (NASDAQ: SINA) on September 27 and 28 respectively are purely fabricated. He also said that Sina must make an official apology to Sohu before October 15, otherwise the matter would go to court.

Three Claims against Sina

The announcement mentioned at the conference basically covers three issues.

Firstly, Sohu claimed it was ranked first of Internet portals in China by Interactive Audience Measurement Asia Ltd. from December 2000 to July 2001 and accused Sina of making a false statement when it claimed it was the largest in July.

Secondly, Sina said that Sohu was under investigation by US law firm Charles J. Pevin for possible violations of US federal securities laws. But such situations happen frequently in the United States, and Sina exaggerated the matter.

Thirdly, Sina reported that Sohu's shareholders had registered to sell more than 8.8 million stocks of the business and one of its biggest shareholders, Hong Kong Jade Bird Science and Technology Ltd. (HKGEM: 0895), would pull out of the company.

"We have become very concerned about some false reports on Sina about Sohu and we are demanding an apology, or we may take legal action," said Sohu CEO Charles Zhang in September.

But it was found out later that



Both Sina Co-Chairman Bruno Wu and Sohu CEO Charles Zhang refuse to compromise

Photos by Wang Yong / Chen Shuyi

news about Jade Bird was proved by its announcement that it will sell the more than 6.72 million shares it holds in Sohu because of "adjusted development strategies". And Sina is not the first and only website which reported the three pieces of news. So why did Sohu pick a fight with Sina?

Under the Pressure of Competition

In a "winner takes all" game of ICPs, the rivalry among the two NASDAQ-listed portals in China is ferocious, and any negative report will become a focus on the other's websites. Both of them are sharpening their competitive edges. So when

Sina and Hong Kong-based Sun Television Cybernetworks Holdings Ltd. (HKSE:0307) agreed to merge, reports from Sohu said that Sina was acquired by Sun-TV. Actually it was not clear from the report which firm would be the acquirer in such a deal.

An important reason for the

fierce competition is that China's online market is tiny at the current stage. Business models including online advertisement, paid wireless services including short messaging service (SMS), online gaming, e-commerce are almost the same, and thus easy to copy. So the two sides sometimes have to compete face to face in an unusual way.

The Compromise Breaks

This Tuesday they seemed to make a co-announcement to deal with all the related issues and achieve a compromise, according to Beijing Youth Daily. It was disclosed recently that software king Microsoft Corp (NASDAQ: MSFT) aims to boost its China Internet presence this month when it rolls out a mainland version of its combined Web browser/Internet portal MSN Explorer. This demonstrates portals in China should pay more attention to their own business and potential competitors, instead of wasting their energy on disputing unimportant issues. "With so many competitors in an underdeveloped market like China, and with threats from international giants getting closer and closer, Internet portals have to think long and hard about how long they can keep their business running," said Merrill Lynch analyst David Cui.

After the deadline of October 17, Sohu made the final decision to take legal action against Sina. Its legal consultant Sun Zhitian told *Beijing Today* on Wednesday evening, "We've taken part in amicable negotiations, though the two sides haven't reached an agreement. We disagree Sina on the wording of the co-announcement. We will take a lawsuit in two days."

New Choice for Cell Phone Users

CDMA Net Will Cover China This Month

By Su Peng

After one year of frenzied activity, the CDMA mobile phone net is finally accomplished. On October 12, China Unicom announced that their CDMA net would cover the whole country this month, as a mark of terminating the GSM monopoly in the Chinese mobile phone market.

CDMA is an important project supported by the Chinese government. China Unicom planned to invest 150 billion yuan in building the net. Opening the CDMA net is the first phase of the whole CDMA project. The initial

CDMA net has a capacity of 15.15 million subscribers, and covers 300 cities attached to 31 provinces and autonomous regions. After the achievement of the first phase, China Unicom will still increase the capacity of the CDMA net gradually.

A senior manager at China Unicom revealed recently that they would test the CDMA net in 11 cities. He also predicted that the CDMA phone number would be available on the Chinese market by the end of this year, or at the beginning of next year.

World Banker

First Chinese to Get No.2 Position in World Bank History

By Yang Xiao

World Bank President James Wolfensohn announced on October 12 that one of the managing directors, Sven Sandstrom, was to retire in mid-December after 30 years at the Bank. Another managing director, Zhang Mansheng, from China, will step into his shoes. He is the first Chinese to get the No.2 position in the 55 years of history of the World Bank.

Zhang is only 45 years old. Some analyses estimate he will possibly be a future president. But according to history, the presidency usually goes to US citizens.

Zhang Mansheng was born in Shanghai in 1957. He studied at Harvard University in the '70s and came back to China as an official in the Ministry of Finance in 1981. By 1992 he was serving in the headquarters of the World Bank in Washington in 1992. From 1996 till recently he was managing director.

Zhang will never forget the day that profoundly affected his career. One day in September 1995, newly promoted James Wolfensohn talked to him personally, "you should be my assistant." At that time Zhang was only 36 years old, and the youngest managing director in the bank.

Apparently Zhang did not believe he had the ability to be fit in. Wolfensohn smiled, "I have already observed you for 3 months."

"I conceded James' advice and spend al-



most 2 years grasping the art of an international team leader," Zhang recounted, "firstly you should keep the members in harmony. The World Bank has 181 country members. My job is to keep them on good terms."

"Secondly you have to be familiar with the relevant business. Every day I have to sign on a lot of files, and so cannot study every file in detail."

"Thirdly you ought to make your team in consolidation. I am in charge of several departments in the bank. There are some hundred people who come from 50 different countries. Their customs, beliefs and cultures are quite different too. To manage them you have to take care."

There is more to Zhang's promotion however. Maybe it is because of China's status in the World Bank. China is the largest country in debt to the World Bank. Every year China gets loans of over \$3 billion. The World Bank has already promised to lend China \$28 billion, and defrayed \$16.4 billion.

File

The World Bank Group is one of the world's largest sources of development assistance. In fiscal year 2001, the institution provided more than \$17 billion in loans to its client countries. It works in more than 100 developing economies with the primary focus of helping the poorest people and the poorest countries.



About 50 Cherokees have been sold in Beijing in 9 days

Photo by Louge

Grand Cherokee Hopes to Regain the Market

By Shan Jinliang

The Grand Cherokee, the first off-road vehicle by Beijing Jeep Corp., Ltd. hits the market in Beijing, Guangzhou, Kunming, Jinan and Xinjiang at the astonishing price of 521,000 yuan from October 10.

The 4.7-L V8 engine off-road vehicle, developed by Daimler-Chrysler Corp., has met the Euro 3 exhaust emission standard. The new vehicle has been under the spotlight since the first model rolled off the production line on September 18. The international luxury Sport Utility Vehicle (SUV) market will be targeted.

The selling price is about 150,000 yuan lower than the imported Grand Cherokee. The timing of the vehicle's launch has been considered a move to capture the Chinese SUV market before accession to WTO. The new Cherokee offers a beacon of hope for Beijing Jeep in a long period of depression, some analysts say.

A Long Depression

Beijing Jeep is the first joint venture in China's auto industry with investments from Beijing Auto Manufacturer and Daimler-Chrysler in 1984. The company has only produced two kinds of Cherokees, namely, BJ2021 and BJ2020. Technology from the American Machine Corporation was exploited in the design. The production line has since run for 17 years.

In recent price wars with other car producers, the corporation was defeated as a result of misunderstanding the market and bad public relations. Over the following years, Beijing Jeep made continual losses.

In a planned economy, the joint venture did not see the need to promote the vehicles as the production quota was decided by the state. When China became more market-oriented, the corporation did not have the far-reaching vision to utilize advanced technology and know-how to sell their products.

Grand Cherokee Arrives in Shining Armor

The foreign partner issued a new joint investment plan last year with the strategy of producing a new product every year. Commenting on the price of 521,000 yuan, Zhang Zhifeng, manager of the sales and marketing department of Beijing Jeep Corporation says, "The Grand Cherokee has a great advantage in its price over all other competitors together with its 11 new patent technologies. We feel very confident in our sales estimate of 700 to 800 vehicles for the rest of the year."

Over 20 Grand Cherokees have been sold in one week in the Beijing area. The above prediction is all the more reasonable when its most powerful competitors Mitsubishi Pajero and Toyota Land Cruiser were imposed with a 100% extra tariff by the Chinese government due to the quality problems of the autos.

According to Zhang, the Mitsubishi Pajero and Toyota Desert King will at the earliest be released from the tariff sanctions next March, assuming that the disputes end by mid-November this year. The general prices of imported cars can only be reduced by some 20% after China's accession to WTO.

Beijing Courts Hong Kong Capital

By Yang Xiao

The 5th Symposium on Beijing - Hong Kong economic cooperation will be held in Beijing on October 23 and 24. This time Beijing plans to exhibit 325 projects to attract investment from Hong Kong. The total investment value will surmount \$13.7 billion.

This year, especially after Beijing won the Olympic bid, many of the projects are devoted to preparing for the Olympic Games. The others are real estate and environmental constructions.

On the list from the Beijing Municipal Development Planning Commission (BMDPC), so far the most striking projects are real estate ones. Hong Kong real estate titan Cheng Yu-Tung has already invested in Chongwen Dis-



Properties developed by HK investors prosper in Beijing
Photos by Chen Shuyi

trict. The properties include New World Shopping City and Apartment. Chongwen District has been given a facelift as a result.

This year Xuanwu District hopes to learn from Chongwen, and plans to rebuild its old blocks, Tianqiao, Yongdingmen, and Caishikou. They will cost 1.3 billion yuan. Xicheng District plans to build luxurious apartments to the west of Tian'anmen square near Zhongnanhai. The cost will be \$0.8 billion. All these real estate projects have obtained permission from the BMDPC.

There are many costly basic construction projects on the list that will attract Hong Kong capital, including one costing 2.7 billion yuan to build a heating factory with Beijing Heating Group.

Foreign Investment Invited to Clear Bad Loans

By Zhao Hongyi

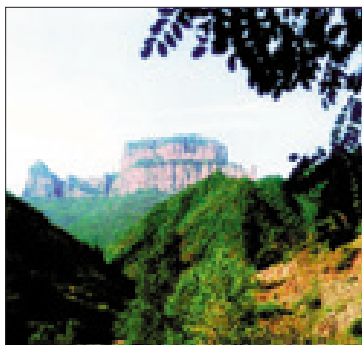
The Chinese government intends to introduce foreign investment fully into the asset readjustment market. Related laws and regulations are being drafted, Beijing Today learnt from the Ministry of Finance.

Currently, there are four state owned bad loans and assets managing corporations, namely Huarong, Changcheng (Great Wall), Dongfang (Orient) and Xinda (Cinda). These four companies took on 1393.9 billion yuan of bad loans and assets, of which 271.2 billion yuan was disposed by the end of June this year, with a total of 137.4 billion yuan recovered. That still leaves a vast amount of work ahead.

It is believed that bad loans and assets in China have greater chances of being recovered if appropriate management is implemented.

With the new laws and regulations being drafted, the four asset management corporations will have the right to sell their company shares and assets in hand to foreign investors.

The central government expects that such a pace will give positive incentives to reform of the country's financial system, as well as accelerating the disposal of bad assets and loans.



Tiantai Platform (天台苗寨)
Sources: Photo.com

Hebei Scenic Spots up for Auction

By Zhao Hongyi

A remote part of Hebei province is the new stage for an auction of operational rights for scenic spots.

Lincheng County lies tucked away in southwestern Hebei province, which surrounds the cities of Beijing and Tianjin. The small county possesses quite a number of beauty spots, with mountains and water, making for an ideal escape for city-dwellers from Beijing and Tianjin.

The Tourist Service Bureau of Lincheng County has launched a worldwide open bidding for 30 years of operational rights for the four scenic spots in the county, namely the White Clouds Cavern in the Kongshan Mountain (崆山白云洞), Small Sky Lake Forest Land (小天池森林景区), Qishan Lake (岐山湖景区) and Tiantai Platform (天台苗寨).

Lincheng County hopes to encourage inflows of capital, bringing new concepts in tourism management, while opening up to the outside world.

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Morgan Stanley Heads into China's Stock Market

By Zhao Hongyi

Morgan Stanley, the preeminent global financial services firm, is marching into China's stock business and investment market, even though obstacles lie in its path.

A market leading player in securities, asset management and credit services, Morgan Stanley combines leadership in investment banking (including underwriting public offerings of securities and mergers, and acquisitions advice) and institutional sales and trading, with strengths in providing investment and global asset management services as well as quality consumer credit products. The company is in the process of establishing a joint venture, China International Capital Corporation (CICC), with China Construction Bank, one of the country's four largest state-owned commercial banks.

So far, CICC is the first of its kind in China. A Sino-foreign joint investment bank, CICC is designed to handle stock business in China's A-share market, which used to be limited only to the country's domestic buyers.

According to the agreement, Morgan Stanley will hold a 35% stake in CICC; the investment company of the Singapore government and Singaporean Di-Li Group will invest 7.5% respectively; China Construction Bank 35% and China Economic and Technical Investment Guarantee Corporation invests another 7.5%.

Reports say foreign shares in joint ventures in the financial sector are required by the Chinese government to be limited to below 49%. More pressing is that after China's entry into the World Trade Organization (WTO), scheduled for the end of this year, foreign shares in a financial entity like CICC will be limited to less than 33% until the market opens further, according to the related agreement reached by China and WTO.

Mr. Wang Xuebin, president of China Construction Bank, told media earlier this week in Beijing that China Construction Bank is currently consulting with China Securities Regulatory Commission (CSRC) on the possibility for CICC to operate stock business in the country's A-share market. The issue of the share ceiling percentage that foreign partners can hold in the joint venture will also be discussed.

Meanwhile, Mr. Philip J. Purcell, Chairman of the Board and Chief Executive Officer of Morgan Stanley also expressed his confidence in China's stock market to media at a press conference in Beijing this week.

"China has the most stable financial and monetary policies in the world, with an excellent labor force. Everything is going well in the country like reform of the country's state-owned enterprises, and the reform and adjustment of currently listed companies," said Mr. Purcell.

"Morgan Stanley will continue to cooperate with China International Capital Corporation, with our Chinese partners, because we realized that by the means of joint venture, we can better pursue our business here.

"Meanwhile, Morgan Stanley will also continue to promote its own traditional business in China. We are devoted to keeping a constructive relations with both the Chinese government and the financial industry in the country," said Mr. Purcell.



Photo by Fan Jiwen

Foreign Branded Petrol Stations Take Root in Beijing

By Zhao Hongyi

Invisible as their product, a number of world famous petrol stations have crept into Beijing in recent weeks. Their appearance and high quality service have quickly won over local consumers.

British-Dutch Shell and American Mobil are among the first wave to establish their roots in the capital. And perhaps British Petroleum will follow suit in the near future, according to sources of Beijing Petroleum Corporation (BPC), the final approver of the petroleum and gas filling stations in Beijing.

According to BPC, at present 9 petrol stations with foreign brands have opened in Beijing: Shell has 6 and Mobil has 3. More are expected to follow over the next few years, thus bringing great

challenges and pressure to the domestic stations, most of which are run by Sino Petroleum Corporation (Sinopec) and China National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC).

In fact, petrol stations with foreign brands no longer cause surprise in most cities in south China.

By means of joint ventures, Shell, Mobil and BP have established nearly 300 stations in the region, mostly in Guangdong and Fujian provinces. Sinopec promised to increase the number of stations with foreign brands to 1,500 over the next few years in the two provinces, while extending to Jiangsu province.

Sources from Shell China confirmed that the group, in cooperation with Sin-

opeo, is planning to establish 500 petrol stations in the province of Jiangsu alone.

According to experts, China must fully open its petroleum retailing market within three years after accession to the World Trade Organization (WTO), with the wholesale market opening within five years. Meanwhile, import tariffs on the country's crude oil, petroleum products and chemicals will significantly decrease from their current levels.

More specifically, the current 16 yuan tariff for each ton of crude oil will be eliminated to zero, 9% for petroleum import will be reduced to 6% and the import tariff for chemicals will be reduced to 6.5%.

Tsinghua Invigorated by Foreign Professors

By Zhao Hongyi

Professor Gavriel Salvendy has been appointed as director and professor of the new engineering faculty of Tsinghua University. Mr. Wang Dazhong, President of the University, made the appointment, formally marking the opening of Tsinghua's door to foreign scholars.

Tsinghua already planned to establish a new industrial engineering faculty earlier this year. Part of the scheme included recruiting the best professors and academicians from around the world. The annual salary for the position was set at \$100,000, low by international standards, but enormous by Chinese present standards.

Gavriel Salvendy is a world-class industrial engineering professor from Purdue University in the United States.

Explaining why he accepted the invitation at the welcoming ceremony at Tsinghua University on October 11, Mr. Salvendy said, "It's the students from Tsinghua who led me to accept the recruitment. I have many students from Tsinghua in the United States. They are always the best in the world."

"I have the intention to bring the new faculty in Tsinghua to the top of the best among more than fifty similar faculties in Chinese universities over the next five years. Ours should be the best and most famous around the world,"

confirmed Prof. Salvendy.

Teamwork, individual dynamics, active cooperation with Chinese colleagues, smooth communication with the government, and the high ratio of technical application in the industries and market are the critical elements for the process to succeed.

In the meantime, another Chinese American scholar has also been appointed as professor by Tsinghua University.

"Tsinghua aims to be a internationally renowned university in the next

few years. Recruiting professors from around the world is only the first step in this regard," declared Mr. Yang Jiaqing, vice president of the University.

According to Mr. Yang, Tsinghua has prepared a budget of over 10 million yuan for recruiting more professors over the next few years. Tsinghua intends to invite more than 50 world-class professors and academicians to teach in the University, thus introducing new concepts and a more varied academic atmosphere to the one hundred-year-old university.



Welcome to Tsinghua! Mr. Gavriel Salvendy receiving the invitation letter from Mr. Wang Dazhong
Photo by Wang Zhenlong

Huatai Prepares for Overseas Merger

By Zhao Hongyi

Chinese insurers are preparing for a possible restructuring of the market as WTO entry approaches. Some of them have taken steps for potential merger or shares selling to their foreign counterparts.

Huatai Insurance Company of China Ltd, the first registered national shareholding property insurance company in China, is preparing for a merger with its foreign counterparts and a possible listing on the domestic stock market. It now ranks No.4 nationwide in terms of scale.

"The real purpose of Huatai's merger with

or selling of shares to foreign investors is to enable the company to better compete in the domestic market and introduce new sets of product development, sales, internal management, training and operation of software in the group," said Mr. Wang Zhimu, chairman of the board of Huatai.

According to Mr. Wang, Huatai wants to be listed on the market within the next five years. The long-term target of Huatai is to become a professional financial service company covering property insurance, life insurance, asset management and fund management.

Experts Call for History And Culture Protection Zone

By Sun Ming

Architectural experts are suggesting that Beijing establish a history and culture protection zone in the center of the city.

At a seminar titled The People's Olympics and the Construction of Beijing Culture held last week, the experts listed twelve key sites of historical and cultural significance, including the Forbidden City, and Jingshan and Beihai parks that would be included in the proposed zone.

The proposed zone covers the site of the Ming and Qing Dynasty Imperial City, which extends south to Tian'anmen (天安门) and north to Di'anmen (地安门), east to Donghuamen (东华门) and west to Xihuamen (西华门). The experts say it is necessary for the government to establish such a zone, in order to guarantee the protection of all those sites by integrated planning.

According to Lu Xiang, a professor at the Beijing Institute of Civil Engineering and Architecture, up to now, most ancient buildings in this area remain in good condition. Furthermore, virtually no high-rise buildings have been allowed to damage the style of the area.

He says these are the advantages of establishing a history and culture protection zone. "In this way, we can invest less while producing better results," said Lu.



Ying Ying warms up by shooting a few hoops

Photo by Cui Jun

Panda Acrobat Will Steal The Limelight

By Sun Ming

Today, 17-year-old Ying Ying, the world's only panda acrobat will perform at Chaoyang Gymnasium.

As a member of Wuhan Acrobatic Troupe, Ying Ying is taking part in the 1st China Acrobats Art Festival, which finishes on October 26.

According to his trainer, pandas have a very strong character. To train them as acrobats, trainers must develop a very close relationship with them, based on mutual respect and trust.

The trainer says he has never encountered another panda with an intellect to match Ying Ying's, which is why Ying Ying is the only panda acrobat the world.



Shuang Qixiang shows some of his creations

Photos by Sun Ming

An Old Man And His Clay Sculptures



Tuye, a traditional clay sculpture of old Beijing

By Sun Ming

Shuang Qixiang, a 71-year-old craftsman, is famous in Beijing for his consummate skill in clay sculpting.

Every important holiday, Shuang is invited by Dong'an Shopping Mall (东安市场) to sell his works there, and the just past Moon Festival was no exception.

"I'm the only one who enjoys such an honor," says Shuang, "This time, I mainly presented Tuye (兔爷) sculptures".

Tuye, a traditional clay sculpture of old Beijing, is so called because it not only looks like a rabbit, but also looks like a man for its stature. In the past, Beijingers traditionally placed a Tuye and four moon cakes on a table to celebrate the coming of the Moon Festival.

Actually, Tuye is just one small part of Shuang's clay sculptures. Many kinds of clay figurines and clay opera masks are included in his repertoire. He also makes stone-ware and pottery.

"I have been deeply attracted by all kinds of clay sculptures since I was 4 years old," says Shuang. As a child, he often visited temple fairs where he saw numerous clay figurines and Tuye. In order to buy molds to make simple clay birds and figures, he saved the pin money given by his parents.

When he was older, he resolved to become a craftsman in the future. His mother seriously objected to the idea, insisting that the social class of craftsmen was very low, and that they earned very little money and no girl would marry him. But Shuang insisted, telling his mother that he would rather be a poor bachelor. At last, his mother gave in to his wishes.

"When I was 14-year-old, I approached Li Rongshan, a famous artist at that time, and asked him to teach me the skills of making clay figurines," said Shuang. According to him, he was often praised by his teacher for his intelligence and innovation.

"What differentiates me from some other artists is perhaps my innovation. I don't like making the same works over and over," says Shuang.

In the 1960's, as a worker at the Beijing Painted Sculpture Factory, Shuang often created new clay sculptures that sold very well. "But many conservative artists didn't like my works," he says.

In 1963, in order to attend a nationwide competition, he made an innovative clay opera mask, which at first was criticized almost unanimously by other artists. However, they quickly changed their opinions when it eventually won a prize.

According to Shuang, his work has already attracted many people from home and abroad. Many of his clay sculptures have been collected by people in Japan, Singapore, France, Belgium, England and so on. "Five pieces of my opera masks were even collected by the United Nations," Shuang says proudly.

Inauguration of Sino-Israeli Dairy Farm

By Sun Ming

An inauguration ceremony for the Sino-Israeli Demonstration Dairy Farm was held last Friday at the dairy farm, located at Yongledian in Tongzhou District.

The idea to build a Sino-Israeli Demonstration Dairy Farm was initiated by former Israeli Agriculture Minister Re-phael Eitan in October 1996 during his visit to China.

As a result of advanced techniques introduced from Israel in milking, feeding, herd management, veterinary care and so on, the cows on the farm can produce more milk, and are healthier than others. There are 620 dairy cattle on the farm at present, and an Israeli technical expert is permanently on location to give technical guidance.

Israel and China are currently working together to establish a demonstration center for agriculture in arid zones.

Growing Market For Home Fire Extinguishers

By Liu Jinmei

Home fire extinguishers are becoming an increasingly common sight around Dazhulan, in the south of Beijing.

Red fire extinguishers are a common sight in public places, but are not so often seen in peoples' homes, however this situation is changing. A big fire in Yushuxiang at Dazhulan recently destroyed 11 houses, and another fire in Da'er Hutong destroyed several more. Such destructive lessons are a vivid warning about the danger fire poses.

A locally available fire extinguisher especially designed for home use can hold 480 milliliters of nonpoisonous liquid. It is 3 times more powerful than the traditional powder fire extinguisher, and can put out as many as three burning oil boilers. Also, it does not stain furniture and doesn't leave an unpleasant smell in the air after application.



the model of Swiss dairy farm

Photo by Jia Ting

Exhibition Brings Rural Switzerland To Beijing

By Ivy Zhang

A folk art exhibition from Switzerland titled "Long Distance, Similar Hearts" opened to the public in Beijing's Working People's Cultural Palace last week.

The exhibition brings a feeling of closeness to nature and the rural life of a distant country, with Bodeli (wooden milking pail with decoratively carved bottom) and paintings depicting agriculture and breeding farm, cattle drives through Alpine pastures, dairy farm, farmer house, herd, public house and to name many more.

In addition to the transported pieces, the hall also houses a number of Chinese folk paintings by artists from all over China.

"Despite the cultural differences, Switzerland and China are related in rural paintings," says Dominique Dreyer, Ambassador of Switzerland to China. The exhibition will close on Sunday.

Campaign Seeks Best Garbage Bin Design

By Sun Ming

A series of activities aimed at raising Beijinger's awareness about environmental protection kicked off recently. The "A clean Beijing starts from me" campaign, is organized by Beijing Youth Daily and Wrigley's.

The activities, which will run for two months, involve two main parts: a competition to design garbage bins for public areas in Beijing, and a clean-up-the streets activity, involving more than ten thousand primary school students.

All Beijingers are welcome to participate in the garbage bin design competition, which finishes on October 29. A prize of 3,000 yuan will be awarded to the person who submits the best design.

Where There's a Will to Study ...

By Sun Ming

Last week, Beijing University of Aeronautics & Astronautics welcomed more than 3,000 freshmen from all over China. Among the new students, a girl named Gao Xu stands out and is pursued by many media these days.

What makes Gao stand out from the others is the way she has funded her education. By scavenging and selling odds and ends from garbage heaps, she has paid all her tuition fees herself, from primary school through to high school.

According to Gao, she comes from a very poor family. At the age of six, most of her young friends entered primary schools, but she couldn't. When she pleaded with her mother, she was told that the income of her family was too low to buy medicine for her ill grand-parents, to say nothing of covering her school fees.



Gao Xu studies at home, with some odds and ends she has scavenged in the background

Photo by Li Zhao

However, spurred on by the desire to study, Gao soon found a way to make money - collecting odds and ends from refuse heaps and then selling them to salvage stations. Thus, the 6-year-old girl picked through piles of garbage day after day, until with her own money, she paid

her tuition fees and was admitted by a primary school. While attending school, Gao had to continue collecting odds and ends every day on her way home. Even though, she always came out top in her class.

Entirely depending on herself, Gao graduated from

primary school, middle school and high school. This year, with the outstanding score of 502 (600 is the maximum possible) Gao was admitted to the Beijing University of Aeronautics & Astronautics. In the same way, Gao paid off the considerable tuition fees charged by the university.

"Thanks to all the people who care about me, but I don't need their help because I can stand on my own two feet," says Gao.

According to Huai Jinpeng, vice president of the university, many warm-hearted people want to give some financial aid to Gao.

A man from Hong Kong called the university many times offering to provide Gao with 4,000 yuan each semester; while a TV station was prepared give her 20,000 yuan if she agreed to an interview on TV. "But all of these offers were refused by Gao Xu," according to Huai.



By Liu Jinmei

★ The State of Global Forestry 2001 issued by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations shows that forest coverage in China has increased rapidly while globally, the total area covered by forest is declining by 0.4% annually.

★ Recently, two businesswomen from Beijing were named among 50 top international businesswomen by America's Fortune magazine. Li Yifei is the general manager of MTV-China, and Wu Shihong is general manager of IT industry group TCL and the former general manager of Microsoft China.

★ A recent survey by the Fangshan Department of Cultural Relics, reveals there are 108 ancient towers standing in Fangshan District, accounting for half of the total ancient towers in Beijing. Among them, the Tang tower complex, which includes seven towers, account for one third of the existing Tang Dynasty towers in China.

★ Almost 12,000 people across the country, including some 1,800 Beijingers, sat for the first MPA (Master of Public Administration) exam on October 13 and 14.

Say Hello, Wave Goodbye

But quicky divorces aren't for everyone

By Xiao Rong

A 32-year-old chauffeur stepped into the Convenience Court of Beijing's Xicheng District People's Court, where he had divorced in just twenty minutes three months ago. But this time he sought the restoration of his five-year marriage.

"We were too impetuous at that time," said Mr. Lu, "when my wife and I quarreled bitterly and could hardly wait to divorce immediately. So I was a little bit repentant for my rashness."

Despite this, he still approved of the recently-introduced simplified procedures for uncontested divorces. Of the more than 2,000 cases since the founding of the Convenience Court on March 31 last year, few have changed their minds. Most divorcees say they savor the convenience and efficiency.

The quick divorce, increasingly popular among Beijingers, takes less than 20 minutes. Not everyone approves. Opinions follow:

Liu Zhen, judge at the Convenience Court of Xicheng District People's Court:

The simplified judicial procedures are popular among ordinary Beijingers, whose divorce cases are voluntary and have no disputes. Since the founding of the Convenience Court last March, there have been altogether more than 2,300 divorce cases settled here. Of these cases, over 70% were from middle-aged and elderly people who have gradually changed from the traditional idea of making do with their low-quality marriage. For most of these people, quick divorce is a simple way of freeing themselves and beginning a new peaceful life without having to let their colleagues or friends know. To this extent, quick divorce can protect the private matters of people, because the recommendation letter from your working company or local neighborhood committee is not demanded in the case of voluntary quick divorce.

Of course, everything has two sides. One of the possible disadvantages of quick divorce is that it



It takes 20 minutes to divorce at the Xicheng District People's Court

may lead to a rash divorce due to a temporary misunderstanding or quarrel. This frequently happens to young couples who still lack full understanding and tolerance of each other. Under such circumstances, we would usually try to persuade them to keep cool and think it over before making the final decision.

There are also some people who try to evade the law by means of a "false" divorce so as to keep privately-owned houses or other properties when the state prepares to dismantle civil buildings. To avoid this, strict investigation of the personal information of those couples demanding a quick divorce will be carried out.

Hu Jun, private entrepreneur, New World Shopping Mall

I haven't learnt much about quick divorce. But in my opinion, it's not a responsible way to settle family disputes. It's not easy for two loving but quite different individuals to live together and understand each other, so misunderstandings and quarrels are inevitable between husband and wife.

Thus what matters most is to alleviate contradictions by calming down instead of escalating the ten-

sion and threatening to divorce. If it's too easy to divorce by settling everything in just 20 minutes, the divorce rate may keep rising, which can no doubt bring harm to the stability of society. As a result, I think the court has the duty to try to mediate for those impetuous couples to prevent the rashness of a quick divorce. After all, it will be too late to be repentant when the divorce agreement becomes effective in a short time.

Liu Qiang, private entrepreneur

I don't think there are any disadvantages to quick divorce as long as both of the couple agree to it. At least, the conciseness and simplicity of a quick divorce can represent the high efficiency of our law enforcement agency and greatly benefit ordinary people by cutting out unnecessary formalities. As to the possibilities of a hurried divorce, I think it's not the fault of the court or the quick divorce. Anyway, everyone should be responsible for himself and his own marriage. If you feel sorry later, why didn't you think it over before?

Yang Ruizhu, retired worker of Beijing No.3 Chemical Works

I'm here today to accompany my daughter and son-in-law to divorce. I'm deeply upset by their divorce. They have been married for over 17 years and have a 14-year-old son. To be frank, I'm totally opposed to their quick divorce because I always hope there would be some possibility of settling their dispute outside of divorce. And my lovely grandson is the poorest one that suffers the direct adverse effects of their divorce. He was an excellent student, but now he has become increasingly silent and depressed. How I wish each family could lead a happy life and need not suffer from the misery of divorce. I'm traditional, but not conservative. I just hope those who want to divorce quickly keep cool and think of your children first.

Wei Xinyan, clerk of the Convenience Court

I think the popularity of quick divorce nowadays reflects the uneasy mood of the whole of society. In the transformation from planned to market economy, everything has multiple choices, including marriage. So people tend to emphasize the quality of marriage and have more freedom to reselect again and again. The increasing divorce rate

these years is a good proof. But I think the quick divorce may only be a temporary phenomenon that will disappear with society entering a new period of returning to the family.

Cui Qingfeng, attorney of Far East Law Firm

In such a big city as Beijing, people must get used to the increasingly competitive society, so a quick divorce is a good way to satisfy the social needs of high efficiency under the presupposition of justice. In addition, there is no need to worry about the rashness of quick divorce, because those who volunteer for quick divorce, especially those white-collar workers, tend to be more rational than emotional and would usually be responsible for their own behavior.

As to the protection of private matters of the clients, I think that's not the only advantage of quick divorce. Without quick divorce, people can also divorce secretly as long as they demand a secret trial, but at the price of much longer time or energy.

The phenomenon of evading the law may be one reason for criticizing quick divorce. But it's not reasonable to attribute this fault to it. With no quick divorces, those who seek to benefit by divorcing still exist. So it's the administrative departments that need to be strengthened so as to prevent the occurrence of such phenomenon.

I think one of the major disadvantages of quick divorce is that it may lead to a written judgment that's too simple. There are usually only uniform written judgments that are divided into several simple categories to explain the reasons for a quick divorce. For those couples without children or property disputes, it's rather easy to handle. But for the contrary cases, it's much more complicated, especially with regard to maintenance and visitation rights. So if the written judgment is too simple to explain the specific terms about the maintenance for children, that raises possibilities for further dispute.

SOUND BITES

"It almost didn't matter. What did matter was that this was a relatively inexpensive way to spread maximum terror without having to solve the technical challenges of spreading the disease widely. Whoever did this had spread panic with only a few anthrax spores, or perhaps only baby powder, and the price of a few stamps."

— New York Times writer Judith Miller, who received a letter suspected of containing anthrax in her office last Saturday, recalls details of what happened, saying the hoaxers have found an easy way to create fear.

"We must not let the terrorists cause our nation to stop traveling, to stop buying, to stop living ordinary lives. We can be alert and we will be alert."

—President George W. Bush speaks to thousands of cheering military personnel and their families at Travis Air Force Base.

"APEC clearly puts China at the front of the world stage. If China does a good job hosting APEC, which offers a good window of opportunity to show world business leaders that China is serious about opening up its economy, it could lead to greater foreign direct investment in the long run."

—Says Tokyo-based economist Rob Subbaraman.

"We are now expecting profits to be significantly below our original plans for the year, almost entirely because of the weakness in advertising markets and, to a lesser extent, the technology recession."

—Marjorie Scardino, the chief executive of Pearson, said the group would cut costs while it waited for an upturn in the advertising cycle.

By Xiao Rong / Chen Ying

Black or Blond?

First Miss China awaits judgment day

By Chen Ying

For the first time, a Chinese woman will participate in Miss World 2001 in South Africa this year. Li Bing, 18, won the title of Miss Sanya in New Silk Road Model Look China 2001 in Sanya, Hainan Province on October 13.

Miss World represents the gold standard of beauty selection. But the evaluation allegedly includes not only outer beauty, but also inner. What chances then, for the first Miss China?

Will she satisfy the aesthetics of the judges, who mostly come from the west? Opinions follow:

Sun Xu, customer at make-up counter of Xinjiekou Department Store

There is a big difference in beauty standards between China and the west. Beauty selection is more accomplished in western countries as I understand it. Most winners must boast both looks and wisdom. Furthermore, most of the misses need to speak

English during the competition. So I doubt whether Miss China will have the language requirements to deal with a live situation.

But it's really good news in any case that Miss China can compete with other countries' girls on the same stage. It means China has become more powerful and prosperous than ever. And other countries can't look down on China again. They need China to participate in their activities. Otherwise, the pageant will lose a quarter of the world audience.

Wang Ying, make-up saleswoman, Huatai Department Store

Beauty is made up of many aspects, such as quality, manners and education. The true beauty should be natural. Beauty selection is just beginning in China. It still needs to develop more. I wish that one day Miss China will win the title of Miss World.

In western counties, it's typi-

cal to describe a beautiful woman as blond, blue eyes, white skin. It's very different from China. We have black hair, brown eyes, yellow color. If girls just abide by western make-up styles, and wear so-called high fashion from the west, they will never capture the attention of foreigners. The most local is the most international. Only when we stand up in our own way can we be successful.

Li Xia, TV hostess

Through Hollywood blockbusters such as "Mulan", we can see the Chinese image that is in westerners' minds. There is some misunderstanding in these western ideas. It's important to introduce China's beauty to the world, no matter what position the girl finishes.

As China will join WTO, there are more opportunities to participate in such activities. Nobody can deny the Asian figure's disadvantage compared to the western female. But the most

important thing is quality. Beauty selection is a way of showing off your best to others. The girl must be unique. Colors, races mean nothing in a sense.

By the way, I dislike female beauty selection. Why do only women participate in such activities? I would rather watch a competition like "the best CEO". Although it can be looked upon as entertainment, it's really a show to satisfy chauvinists.

Michael Reynolds, photographer

Western people think Chinese are beautiful because they look different and vice-versa. I don't think eastern people have any disadvantage in their figure. For Westerners, it's very common to see blond hair, blue-eyed girls.

So many of them think that eastern people are exotic. Anyway, Chinese should be proud of their beauty. There is no place in the world that doesn't have beautiful women. That certainly goes for China too.



Li Bing struts her stuff at New Silk Road Model Look China 2001
Photo by Lu Beifeng

Finance still the most attractive employment sector

60% of those surveyed agree that finance is the most attractive sector to work in, ranking first among 11 listed sectors. Finance has held this leading position for two years.

The current characteristics of the Chinese economic system may be responsible for such a situation. The market economy has been adopted and established in China, resulting in certain industries thriving in the market, but finance still takes advantage of its monopoly position in the economy.

Therefore with the advantage in gaining high profit, the salaries in this industry are generally higher than in others.

Attention given to advanced technology rather than education

Hi-tech and business come second and third respectively as attractive employment sectors on the list, with the support of 50% and 30% of those surveyed. This is a reversal of the positions the two held in a similar survey conducted a year ago.

The change shows that people are more aware of the importance in advanced technology in gaining profits for an enterprise, as well as in enhancing progress in society.

However only 21% regard education as an attractive sector. It may be due to the comparatively low salary and poorer living conditions of teachers.

Efforts by the government to improve teachers' welfare, including increasing teacher's salaries, may improve this situation.

Government sector not so attractive

Only 20% of the surveyed favor working in the government sector, which ranks sixth on the list. Ten years ago, competition for jobs in the government sector was extremely fierce.

It is regarded that working for the government mean guaranteed opportunities for promotion, and is a sure way of gaining high social status. Now people are focusing more on seeking economic benefits.

With comparatively low salaries, people working in the government sector may find it difficult to meet the increasing expenses of education, medical treatment, funding their retirement and purchasing a house.

Most people are satisfied with their current salary

62% of those surveyed say they are satisfied with their current salary. 4% are very satisfied; 25% are satisfied, though their present salary is not as high as expected; while 33% say their salary is satisfactory compared with what they received in the past.

More than 4.5 million people throughout the country have directly benefited from the State Council's move to increase salaries in April this year.

Furthermore, the recent resolution to increase the salary of public servants by 15% will have a flow on effect, bringing an increase in the salaries of ordinary working people. This is expected to further increase the 'salary satisfaction quotient'.

Salary Satisfactory or Not?

By Su Wei

Are city dwellers satisfied with their present salaries? What do they consider to be the key factors by which their salaries are determined? Which occupations are most attractive for city dwellers?

The China Economic Monitoring & Analysis Center, in cooperation with CCTV's economic department conducted, a survey recently among residents of Chinese cities to determine their attitudes towards these issues.

Misunderstanding of 'service sector'

Almost 42% of those surveyed consider the service sector to be the worst option for employment, as such jobs are perceived to offer the lowest salaries, however this may reflect a misconception about the nature of the service sector.

Service is seen to be limited to jobs requiring either heavy physical labor, low salary, or both; such as restaurant and hotel staff, bus and train conductors and so on. In fact, the service sector also includes services in such areas as telecommunications and consultation.

In fact, people employed in the consultation sector generally earn a minimum of 2,500 yuan per month.

People are optimistic about their future...

93% of those surveyed are optimistic about the prospect of seeing a big increase in salary, including 41% believing such an increase will take place within the next three years, 30% within 3 to 5 years and 24% who believe they will definitely see such an increase, but are uncertain about when.

The continued rapid economic improvements, coupled with an increasing number of job opportunities, may be the most direct reason for such optimism.

Since the 1990s, the development of the market economy has led to higher salaries, while the levying of income tax has been effective in reducing differences between rich and poor.

Job title not a key factor in determining salary

34% of the surveyed agree that individual capability is the most important factor in determining their salary, followed by 21% who put the profit margin of the enterprise they work for first, and 18% for the country's economic situation. Only 9% believe their actual job title is the most important factor.

It is evident that under the market economy system, people are more concerned about their own work quality. They agree that the greater the contribution they make, they more they will get.

People have realized that in a competition driven society, self-improvement is the basis for a high salary. Consequently MBA, computer, accounting and English courses are becoming hot consumption spots.

Furthermore, people's awareness of the importance of the enterprise profits and the country's economic condition suggests an improvement in the public's awareness as a whole.

However for many people, the individual's contribution is still not taken into account in determining their salaries.

Especially in certain government sectors or some state-owned enterprises, seniority or length of employment are the only basis for higher salaries. Such phenomena will disappear with the continued improvement of the market economy, though it may yet take some time.

...though pessimism still exists

About 6% of the surveyed say "they have no hope for any increase in their salaries in the future". Such people are generally in their middle age, have a low level of education and are unskilled. Also the economic situation of the enterprise they are employed by is poor, or they face being laid off.



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APEC

Hits Shanghai

By Ivy Zhang / Liu Jinmei

Walking through a maze of narrow, winding lanes, clothes of different colors and sizes hang from long bamboo poles crisscrossing overhead. This is the Shanghai in many people's memory, or imagination. However, if you visit those old lanes these days, you'll find yourself immersed in a sea of APEC banners and flowers.

From October 15, an intense round of APEC (Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation) meetings have been underway in Shanghai, and will culminate with the leaders meeting, which winds up on October 21.

With the theme "Meeting New Challenges in the New Century; Achieving Common Prosperity through Participation and Cooperation", government and business leaders from the 21 APEC member economies will

meet to discuss trade and other issues. The Shanghai APEC summit will be the biggest international gathering of world leaders in Chinese history.

■ The Informal Senior Officials' Meeting (SOM) opened on Oct. 15 and wound up the same day, one day ahead of schedule.

■ APEC 2001 Ministerial Meeting was held on Oct. 17 and 18 at the Shanghai International Convention Center.

■ APEC CEO Summit 2001 is convening from Oct. 18 to 20.

■ APEC Business Advisory Council (ABAC) kicked off on Oct. 18 and concludes on Oct. 21.

■ The 9th Informal APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting is scheduled for Oct. 20 to 21.



The eyes of the world are on Shanghai, the pearl of the east, during the current round of APEC meetings

Photos by Xinhua

The Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) was established in response to the growing interdependence among Asia-Pacific economies and to the need to advance Asia-Pacific economic dynamism and sense of community.

APEC began in 1989, when Australia hosted the first annual Ministerial Meeting of Foreign and Trade Ministers from 12 Asia-Pacific economies to discuss ways to increase cooperation in this fast-expanding region of the world.

In 1993, the United States held the first annual meeting of APEC Leaders at Blake Island, near Seattle, to give trade liberalization and economic cooperation further impetus and high level commitment, to develop a

spirit of community in the region and to promote sustainable growth and equitable development.

APEC now comprises 21 member economies: Australia, Brunei Darussalam, Canada, Chile, People's Republic of China, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Japan, Republic of South Korea, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Republic of the Philippines, Russia, Singapore, Chinese Taipei (Taiwan), Thailand, the United States, and Vietnam.

There are three official observers: the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Secretariat, the Pacific Economic Cooperation Council (PECC), and the South Pacific Forum (SPF).

By Ivy Zhang / Liu Jinmei

Highlights

APEC FMs Reach Consensus on Anti-Terrorism

Foreign ministers attending the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Ministerial Meeting in Shanghai Thursday reached consensus on anti-terrorism during their working breakfast hosted by Chinese Foreign Minister Tang Jiaxuan.

Following are the key points that were agreed on:

— All terrorist activities pose a threat to international peace and security, and should be sternly condemned and fought against. The International community should take a united stance on the issue;

— All anti-terrorist international covenants and resolutions adopted by the United Nations Security Council should be earnestly implemented, in particular, any acts of financing terrorism should be prevented and prohibited and all terrorists should be dealt with according to law;

— It is necessary to strengthen international cooperation and give full play to the role of the United Nations and its Security Council in combating terrorism;

— Anti-terrorism is a 'just verses evil' struggle, and a show of strength of civilization against barbarianism, rather than a conflict among different ethnic groups, religions or cultures.

Economic recovery stressed

The Economic Leaders' Meeting slated for October 20 and 21 is expected to send a strong message of support for multilateral trading systems, including the launch of a new round of World Trade Organization talks.

According to Wang Guangya, chair of the APEC Senior Officials' Meeting (SOM), fighting economic slowdown has been a priority issue at APEC meetings since the beginning of this year and has attracted more attention in the wake of the terrorist attacks in the United States on September 11.

APEC members are determined to unite and move forward to implement the Bogor Goals and push forward the Ecotech (economic and technical cooperation) agenda, while taking into account all uncertainties, all slowdowns and difficulties.

"It will be a strong message coming from this APEC meeting," said Wang, who is also vice-foreign minister. "We want this region to recover. We want to see more economic growth and we want other regions to believe that the Asia-Pacific region is still hopeful and confident in its economic prospects," he added.

APEC Adopts e-Strategy to Further Goals

The Senior Officials Meeting (SOM) of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) endorsed an e-APEC strategy for the development of a digital society in the Asia-Pacific region that will help create an environment for strengthening market structures and institutions within the APEC economies. This was one of several accomplishments to facilitate long-range goals - such as narrowing the "digital divide" among member economies - achieved by a gathering of senior officials representing all the 21 APEC member nations, Wang told a press conference on Tuesday.

APEC benefits China

As a host country, China is optimistic about the comprehensive and long-term value of the APEC meetings.



Analysts predict the meetings will boost China's opening and reform, and further elevate its status and extend its influence in the world. "That APEC chose China as its host country itself shows the trust of the 20 other economies towards China, so it must promote the international status of China," according to Yang Yuanqing, president of Legend Group.

Simultaneously, the forum also provides a precious opportunity for China to impress the world with its developing new look after the unification of Hong Kong and Macao, the success in Beijing's bid for the 2008 Olympics and the Chinese soccer team entering the World Cup.

APEC has always played an important role in supporting China's WTO entry and with accession to the WTO imminent, China is bound to further integrate with the rest of the world in terms of finance, insurance, foreign trade, tourism, legal consultation, assets evaluation and so on.

As the most developed city of China, Shanghai has established an especially close relationship with the APEC economies. Among 28,000 foreign-funded enterprises in Shanghai, over 20,000 are from APEC members. So this forum is expected to accelerate Shanghai's drive to become a world economic, finance and trade center.

Sidelights



Tight security assures safety of participants

The high-profile serial APEC meetings began in Shanghai Monday amid tight security. Anyone entering conference venues or related sites such as the International Convention Center and the International Media Center must undergo a thorough check. According to a police officer at the Media Center, all the security guards were hand picked and have a background in technological areas; he himself comes from a police college and majored in computer science.

Besides all the standard security checks and X-ray examination of bags and equipment, journalists were asked to play their tape recorders, shut down and reopen mobile phones and press the shutter button of cameras.

A Chinese reporter said that his colleague, when passing through the security check Sunday, was asked to drink the cup of Coca Cola he brought with him, to show that it was real Coca Cola and not something more sinister!

Yang Guoqiang, an official with the preparatory office of the Shanghai APEC meetings, declared Shanghai to be "a safe place", while Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Zhang Qiyue said that China "is fully capable of ensuring the safety of every participant" in the APEC meetings.

According to the local police

department, more than 10,000 security guards have been stationed at important conference venues and hotels for the meetings, while security has been strengthened for Shanghai's air space and waters.

"Green" Shanghai Greeting World Guests

"Build a green Shanghai, Host a green APEC" is the slogan greeting conference participants.

The newly cleaned up Suzhou Creek, which had emitted a foul odor for the last 80 years, is a showcase of Shanghai's efforts to control pollution and improve environment. Over 30,000 taxis in Shanghai now run on LPG, and the first 200 low-pollution buses have also been put into use. The green land in Shanghai's urban areas has increased from 1.15 square meters per capita in 1993 to 4.6 square meters at present and the covering rate of the green areas has reached 22%.

The 17,000 guest rooms in over 30 four and five-star hotels have been furnished according to the latest environmentally safe standards. Restaurants in Shanghai offer "green" vegetables and meats.

During the meetings, recycled paper is used for documents, notices and other materials, including invitations and visiting cards. Waste paper, used batteries and broken lamps are to be recycled after careful classification.

Chinese Spokesman besieged by journalists

On Wednesday afternoon, the Shanghai APEC organizing committee gave a cocktail party in honor of journalists from home and abroad. However, the journalists showed much more interest in the host Wang Guangya, vice Minister of Foreign affairs than the provided delicacies.

As soon as the opening speech was over, journalists crowded forward to fire questions at Wang, who had to be evacuated by the organizers. Only Zhu Bangzao, spokesman for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs remained to deal with the journalists.

Fully adept at handling the press, Zhu maintained a calm demeanor in the crowd of jostling journalists. "Don't worry, I'll inform you of the latest news as soon as there is any." He answered numerous questions while moving calmly around the hall. After thirty minutes, when the barrage of questions had ended, Zhu finally paused for breath.

Angels in red offering best service

Groups of young volunteers in red T-shirts and sun visors can be seen all around the venues for APEC meetings, international media center and hotels for participants, providing various kinds of services.

Most of these 2,100-odd red angels come from nearly 30 colleges and universities, such as Fudan University and Shanghai Foreign Languages University. To be a volunteer for the APEC meetings, they have been tested and interviewed four or five times on their oral English, knowledge about APEC, diplomatic etiquette and so on.

"Best city, Best youth, Best service" is the slogan of the volunteers serving the APEC meetings in Shanghai. Foreign journalists also expressed their satisfaction with the volunteers for their availability and described them as "very kind and helpful." "All of them are friendly and have a very good command of English," according to Andrew Browne, Reuters Beijing Bureau chief.

Dropping Everything for the Road

By Hu Xiaoli

‘Donkey’ is the flattering nickname given to Chinese backpackers passionate about life on the road. While the more dignified ‘mule’ is awarded to those hardy outdoor types who enjoy risking their skin climbing, skiing, or caving. The top rank of ‘wolf’ goes to those who manage to combine all of the above, while taking photos. Yang Bo is, without doubt, a wolf who roves mostly alone, rarely in packs.

The Traveling Photograph is the watering hole near the north gate of Beijing Library where these ‘donkeys’, ‘mules’ and ‘wolves’ congregate. Wearing a casual white T-shirt and blue jeans, Yang Bo recounted his travel experiences in the bar he co-owns with four friends. The walls were covered with photos from the owners’ travels, punctuated only by shelves stacked with travel books and magazines. A slide projector proudly stood in the middle of the room, coming to life for travelogues. At a nearby table, people were excitedly planning a trip.

“I believe getting closer to nature is at the core of every person. Some people cannot find this point during their whole life; some others know it but cannot realize it; some, however, understand it and follow their own nature,” said Yang Bo seriously.

Living the Life of a Fish

As well as belonging to the category ‘wolf’, Yang Bo has a personal nickname “Fish in River”, which serves as his net name on the bar’s web site (www.travel-photograph.com). Yang smiled as he cast his mind back to the time and place where his name was born. The setting is Liye, a small town in the west of Hunan province which sits near the banks of the Qiu River. As a young boy, he spent most of his time with the older kids wandering, climbing, fishing and swimming. When the summer heat would hit, Yang would spend more than 8 hours a day in the waters of the river. “When I was in the river, I felt as free as a fish,” he recalled.

His aquatic freedom was soon under threat however when a fortune-teller predicted watery doom for him one summer. At the time he was just 6 years old. Such a prognosis was taken seriously by his family, which forbade him to swim. His grandmother put ink spots on his body to keep him out of the water. If he came back with no spots, he would have to face a beating. Little Yang could not resist the pull of the water, so he sneaked out and swam as usual, getting friends to put new spots on him.

“I’ve been lucky to live happily until now,” Yang joked. At the age of 12, Yang was sent to study in the county school. Away from the free and easy life of the country, Yang felt lost for a time, although he behaved like a model student to his teachers. Fate called him back to

nature in 1994 when he enrolled in Beijing University.

“I’m not sure when it was in college that I started to love exploring remote areas. Maybe it was because of my major,” explained Yang. As a student in the Department of Urban Planning and Environment, he had many chances to get close to nature in field practice. The great outdoors rekindled all the memories of his happy childhood back home in Liye. The hidden passion in his heart resurfaced. Yang suddenly found how much he loved nature and how his deep heart yearned for a free, floating life. From then on, he has been traveling with his friends every weekend and holiday in the countryside surrounding Beijing.

Surprises Around Every Corner

Yang Bo likes to use the word “travel”, rather than “tourism”. According to him, travel makes people find new things and experiences, while touring just allows people to confirm what they read or hear from guidebooks. On every trip, alone or with friends, Yang likes to meet locals, understand their way of life, and enjoy every new experience. “I love wandering in the remote villages,” Yang said with a smile. “You will always be enchantingly surprised.”

As most people were heading home to be with family last Spring Festival, Yang carried his heavy backpack alone all the way to Yunnan province. It didn’t take long for a story to be born: on a bus, he met a group of girls heading home for the festival. Yang struck up a conversation and they soon became the best of buddies. The girls ended up inviting Yang to come to their hometown to celebrate Spring Festival. “I was certainly up for that,” laughed Yang.

The girls lived in a village of the Naxi nationality, a very old ethnic minority in China. One of the girls called Yang Jia kindly invited him to stay at her home, which was a two-story wooden house in typical Naxi style. The whole family was very hospitable to him.

“I was the only guest in the village at that time,” Yang recalled. He was lucky enough to attend the village’s horse racing festival. The villagers made him feel so welcome he felt like he was in the midst of a large family. “You will never find the same experience in the city,” Yang gestured, seeming to be reliving the special memories.

During his time in remote villages, Yang was always touched by the locals’ pure kindness. They greeted him with a friendly smile, and some invited him to have a talk or have a drink in their homes. “So, most of the time, I feel lost when coming back to the city again,” he said. “City dwellers have better convenience but have to breathe the dirty air and put up with cold and complicated relationships between people.” For Yang Bo, the city is always a hotel rather than a home.

Body in Hell, Eyes in Paradise

Yang always persuades people around him to travel. ‘Double tortures, double treats. Body in hell while eyes in paradise,’ is Yang’s travel slogan. Apart wandering around villages and towns, he also loves all kinds of outdoor activities. “Caving, skiing, crossing wild regions are all my favorites,” Yang smiled.

Once, he decided to check out an unexplored cave in Hunan with another friend. The cave called Flying Tiger was the subject of mysterious tales, and nobody dared to venture inside for a long time. When standing at the entrance of the cave, his friend turned around and tried to persuade Yang to turn back. Of course having

none of it, Yang went inside the cave by himself. “Yeah, sometimes it’s scary walking through the dark in a deadly quiet cave. The further you go, the more dangers you face,” he explained.

But the temptation of the unknown ahead kept him going. Although he had to face the twisted passages and merciless pits, he was lucky enough to see transparent blind fish, and gatherings of beautiful stalactites. “I caught three kinds of blind fish,” Yang cheerfully recounted. The new findings gave him great pleasure. “The temptation of caving is that you will never know what is waiting for you ahead. Maybe only your footsteps have left imprints after millions of years.”

Climbing is another favorite of Yang’s. Last October, Yang climbed Taibai Mountain with three friends. They spent five days walking across the mountain with heavy backpacks and photography equipment. One night, when Yang was sleeping soundly in the tent at 3000 meters in the mountain, he suddenly heard something ruffling their tent. Everybody was terrified, and Yang was no exception. “I held the Swiss knife tightly and braced myself to fight with the thing outside,” Yang vividly relived the moment.

The whole tent was shaken violently but finally whatever it was left. They crept out and found huge footprints on the ground. “We were really scared, but fell asleep again quickly, for we were so tired,” Yang laughed. He pointed at some beautiful pictures on the wall from that trip, as if he had never experienced those horrible moments.

“I never think of giving up my ‘dangerous’ hobbies, for I believe fate will plan for the end, so I don’t need to worry about that,” Yang philosophically concluded.

Just Go Traveling

Yang’s favorite song, written by a friend and soul mate of his, inspires him to travel for the still.

“Playing the guitar, I will tell my story from the beginning of my journey! I won’t stay long in the street of every city! I will go further as long as I earn the money! Except life, I can let go of anything! Go on a journey, friends, if you want a colorful life! Except life, everything can be dropped! Go on a journey, my friends.”

After these years’ traveling, Yang has made many good friends with the same ideas as him regarding travel. In order to pass his traveling experiences onto others, Yang opened this book bar several months ago along with four other friends. “It is really enjoyable to sit in the bar, drinking beers and exchanging travel experiences with my mates.” Now this simply-furnished bar has become one of the backpacker haunts of China.

Yang loves traveling. “Life is short, I will try my best to follow my own heart and experience more on the journey of life.” When seeing a stunning landscape or a beautiful girl, Yang will sometimes be tempted to stay, but “I know I can’t stop, for I have so many mysterious places waiting for me to see.”

Yang’s present dream is to climb the 7505 meters Mustag Mountain in Xinjiang with his friends. “Don’t worry too much. Just go on a journey if you think of traveling.”

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Planning a trip with friends



Enjoying sitting in his own bar



Standing at the top of a mountain with great joy

Photos by Zhuang Jian



Preparing for a journey

Kunqu Opera Slowly Waking

By Miao Yajie

Five months after being proclaimed as the 'Masterpiece of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity', Kunqu Opera, the most ancient and representative classic art in China, is now revealing in its first mass presentation on Beijing's autumn stage from 14th to 18th this week and 21st to 25th next week. Most of the works on show are being performed for the first time in recent years.

Seven existing troupes from Beijing, Shanghai, and Jiangsu, Zhejiang and Hunan provinces, have meticulously chosen nearly 30 extracts and 3 complete operas for performance at Chang'an Theater and the People's Theater.

Later this month on the 29th, under the invitation of UNESCO, Kunqu is going to make its debut at UNESCO's headquarters in Paris for the 31st General Conference. Then it's off on a one-week tour to Taiwan next month, which was arranged half a year ago with sponsorship from the International New Aspect Cultural and Educational Foundation. Such a tight performance schedule seems to indicate that the coming-back-to-life of the 'living fossil' is just round the corner.

This 'root of Chinese opera' has seen more sunshine over the past five months than in the

past five years. However, it is unreasonable to expect Kunqu to rise above all the local operas to take pole position across the whole country. A UNESCO acknowledgement is unlikely to give it strength in a mere five months to overtake Beijing Opera, China's most popular. Fostering performers, said to be more rare than the Manchurian tiger with a total of less than 800 nationwide, takes time. The same goes for audiences, without forgetting amateur performers emerging from groups of fans.

The predicament Kunqu was facing five months ago now becomes more pressing than ever. Issues needing attention include the rescue and preservation of repertoires, the training of directors, stage designers, and art managers that thoroughly understands the principles of the opera.

To run the classics in a market economy is never an easy task. The six troupes' appearance in Beijing created a bit of a stir among professionals and fans, but in a metropolis with 12 million inhabitants, what seems like a stir is often little more than a ripple.

According to Chang'an Theater, box-office turnout for 14th October was about 70%, which is far from satisfactory. It is slightly surprising that attendance wasn't higher since the

performance was definitely of a high standard; furthermore, the city should house opera lovers, art lovers, art professionals, art students, and any people with a spirit to try 'new' things. As for the revival and preservation of Kunqu, the scripts, performers, and rehearsals all need one thing to survive in the market economy: money.

In this case, the successful operation of a performance in Hong Kong and Taiwan might be useful for reference.

In the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR), the Institute of Promotion of Chinese Culture is responsible for making recommendations to the SAR government.

"The institute recommends to the government which troupe is worth inviting to perform in Hong Kong. Our recommendation will be taken into consideration carefully, then the government will allocate funds to sponsor the performance," explained Gu Zhaoshen, member of the institute.

Meanwhile, a non-governmental, non-profitable organization in Taiwan, the International New Aspect Cultural and Educational Foundation, has managed many of the Kunqu performances. The chairwoman of the foundation, Fan Mannong, was raised against a background of western music including a strict training in piano from a young

age. She frankly admitted that she was totally illiterate with regards to Kunqu 9 years ago. "I was astounded by the beauty of Kunqu the first time I watched a live performance in Taipei in 1992. I knew I'd found the best thing in my life," said Fan.

Since then, New Aspect has embarked on the long journey of promoting Kunqu in Taiwan. They invited at least one troupe to Taiwan each year for nine years. Planning usually begins half a year in advance, which includes booking the best theater, publicizing Kunqu and the specific troupe, and going to schools and universities to lecture on Kunqu. The total investment of a one-week performance is about \$5,000,000 NT dollars (approximately 1,250,000 yuan), according to Fan, and the loss each time is about \$2,000,000 NT dollars (500,000 yuan). "But it's worth the effort," she said.

Maybe Kunqu on the Chinese mainland also needs such resolute sponsors. It is hoped that in the near future big entrepreneurs will transfer their zeal from football to the promotion of Kunqu, and contribute to the revival of the roots of the nation's performing arts.

For more information on the development of Kunqu Opera, please visit Beijing Today's website at www.ynet.com and refer to the Legacy page in the 8th edition, June 29.



A scene from a newly adapted opera Ban Zhao, performed by Shanghai Kunqu Opera Troupe

Photo by Chen Shuyi

Panjiayuan Market Given More Space to Breathe



Photo by Cui Jun

By Shi Xinyu

A sum of 2.4 million yuan (about \$2.4 million) has been poured into Panjiayuan Flea Market by the Chaoyang District government for its reconstruction and extension. The new market is planned to reach Huawei Road to the west, and extend to the South Road of the eastern third ring in the south; the whole area covers 48,000m². Work is currently going ahead without disturbing regular daily business.

Panjiayuan Flea Market, formed spontaneously by some peddlers in 1992, has become the biggest flea market in China, dealing mainly in secondhand goods, folk handicrafts, calligraphy and paintings. It greets between 60 and 80 thousand guests every weekend, among which are thousands of foreign visitors. At present, just before the extension, it contains more than 3,000 stalls and occupies an area of 33,000m².

The turnover each Saturday or Sunday can reach almost 1 million yuan (about \$120,000) and the total yearly net income is around 4 million yuan (about \$480,000), while annual tax is over 200,000 yuan (about \$24,000).

Wang Shaoge, a retired editor aged over 70, has visited Panjiayuan every week since the market came into being in the early 1990s. His collections from Panjiayuan vary from ink stones, rubbings, stone inscriptions, and porcelain, to old books, furniture and jade-crafts. "I am not a professional collector and just go to Panjiayuan for interest and diversion." As a witness to all the changes that have taken place in the market, Wang commented: "As market space has enlarged little by little, instead of the curio dealers and professional collectors of the first few years, ordinary citizens and visitors from other cities or counties now form the majority of buyers. So the market

has become more and more crowded."

The hordes of people are in fact the motivation for the ongoing reconstruction and extension of the area. An investment of 20 million yuan will create an environment more favorable to doing business, thus attracting more customers and cementing more profitable deals.

Though the investors are optimistic about the future, many ordinary stall holders still have their doubts.

"When the reconstruction work finishes, our trading opportunities will definitely be better than now," said Wu Cuilan, a middle-aged woman who has been in the secondhand business for many years, "if the new market doesn't attract more people to shop, either our profit will decrease, or prices will be higher than before. Then it will be difficult for us to make a choice."

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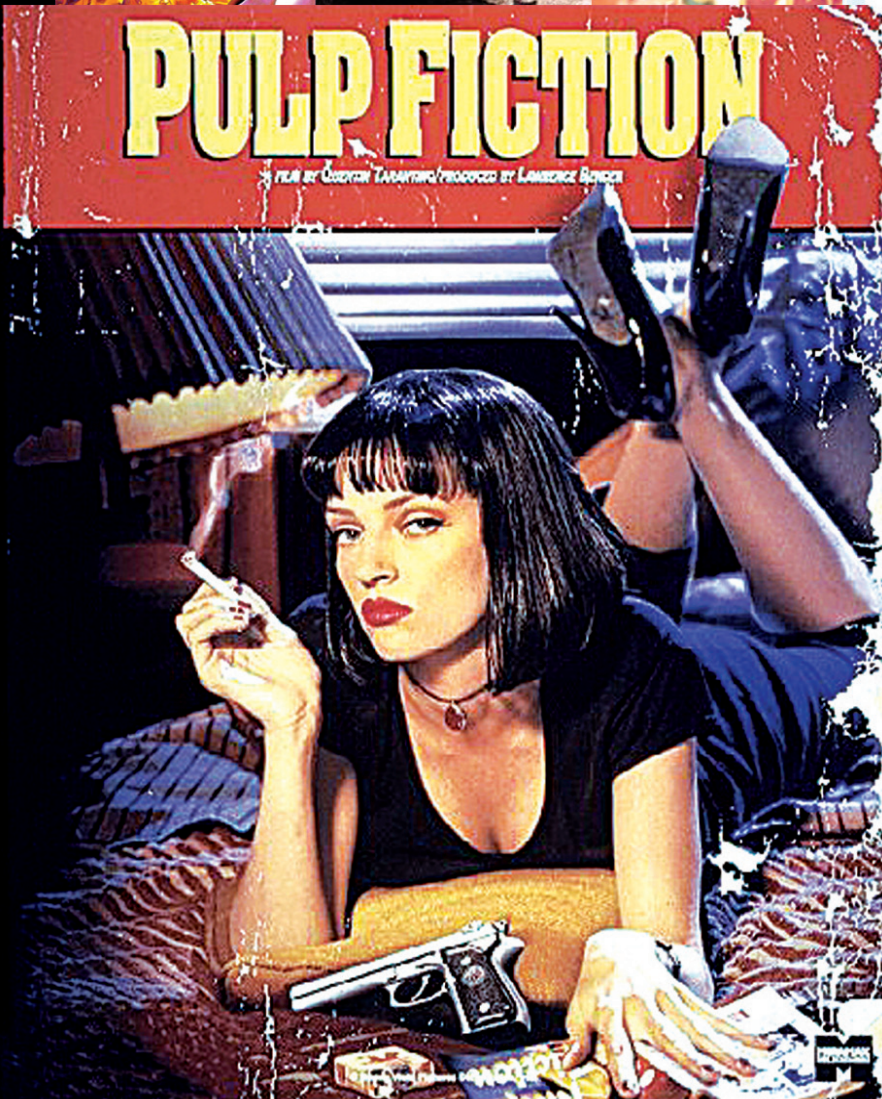
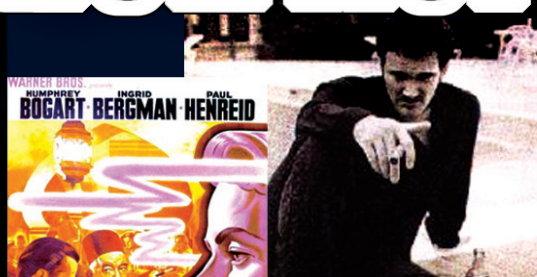
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Navigation Across Pirate Movies



PULP FICTION

By Shi Xinyu

“A guide for pirate movie paddlers and collectors.” Thus Guo Xiaolu jokingly refers to her newly published book, *Map to Movies*, which is actually a volume of essays covering 40 classic films.

Different from the usual outpourings of arts criticism, this book comes from Guo's memories of her seven years' campus life at Beijing Film Academy, where she majored in Film Theory and Literature. Some of the memories were recorded in her notebooks while others are moments and feelings awakened by those notes. Guo Xiaolu, a young lady in her twenties, currently a college teacher, screenwriter and movie director, has drawn the map of her movieland with a sensitive heart and light touch.

In contrast to recondite terminology distant from most ordinary people, the book is written in flowing prose because Guo “hates some film theories composed of strange words and equipped with a swaggering attitude.” So she wrote this book, “apparently citing theory, but with no theorization at all.”

Different from common movie reviews, some articles in *Map of Movies* only tell stories about the author herself.

In *Citizen Kane*, Guo dodged the film from the first word and told about a dream in a small bar named Citizen Kane containing herself and her schoolmates. *Dancer in the Dark* records a trip to Vietnam, Cambodia and Hong Kong. Many articles in the book are only the feelings or memories introduced by the movies.

According to the publisher, the book is a best seller appealing to a wide range of readers from ordinary film lovers to professional movie practitioners. And for the young author, the great achievement of the book is to fulfill her dream of giving her campus days sublimation while sharing her passion for films with more readers.

A Map in Every Heart (also preface)

By Guo Xiaolu

On a winter's night in 2000, I spoke to myself, “Well, now you must stop retailing your words on movies to those magazines and newspapers. It is time to begin a systematic work to make them into a book of movies.”

Then I found seven notebooks, with shabby covers and some yellow watermarks. I saw another Guo Xiaolu in that faraway period contained in the notebooks. I saw that I had sincerely and seriously written down many childish opinions on classic films; that I had expressed endless admiration for those great masters; furthermore, that I had drawn many pictures of camera positions and lighting between paragraphs of the notes.

The words used in the notes are very solemn. Of course something else was left in the notes. Some unfinished letters or some strange curses could often be found between lines. But now, to whom those letters were addressed and at whom the curses were pointed is a mystery to me: I cannot remember.

I stand in piles of beaten-up books and read my former notes page by page. I find all the masters' names: Jean-Luc Godard, Francois Truffaut, Federico Fellini, Michelangelo Antonioni, Sergei Eisenstein, Pier Paolo Pasolini, Vsevolod Pudovkin. Those names blur little by little in my memories after graduation, and I cannot even tell clearly who is director for which film and who is leader in which genre. But when I opened one notebook after the other, those familiar scenes flashed across my mind again: myself, aged 19, sitting in a classroom with huge black cloth over the windows. The instructor stood in front of a black-white movie, pointing at something.

Dazzling sunshine from the Jimenqiao overpass on the northern third ring road was blocked out of the classroom. And I was sometimes clear and sometimes dizzy. Now I am wide awake in the periods that used to make my life exciting, and try to read the history of those films, part of which is tied up with my own life.

(abstract)

By Guo Xiaolu

‘Pulp Fiction’ is an accurate name, something jeering and something bantering.

It is filled with the stuff of quick-witted teasing, making fun of violence, making fun of junk food, and making fun of eroticism. The director even amused himself by playing with some bloody scenes. The violence in the movie is made to fit like a glove that would not harass either the intelligentsia or women. Besides black humor and violence, Quentin Tarantino also shows respect to women here and there in the movie. All male characters, whether a cocky guy in a gang, a killer, a boxer, or just a hooligan, however bad-tempered or cold-blooded they are, when they come back home, they are nothing but lambskins to their wives. They never hurt women, are even somewhat henpecked, seeming as if they live in a matriarchal society. So all basic human emotions and love affairs should be found in a real pulp fiction: all are there in this movie.

Violence plus eroticism are components of this “fiction”. Dressed up with anti-traditional structures and post-modern gags, it suddenly changes from a plain paperback sold on the corner of the street into an elegant hardcover. Thus it succeeds.

Quentin Tarantino, the civilian genius who used to work in a video store and finally built up his own film theories, came to Beijing for the Sundance Movie Festival in 1994. I remember the movie ‘Barton Fink’ was also shown, but it was a pity the Coen Brothers were not there. At that time, all movies were shown at the 21st Century Hotel, near Beijing's Lufthansa Center, and that is where we saw the film for the first time.

When the movie was over, thunderous applause exploded. Then we saw Tarantino, wear-

ing a checked shirt like a farmer, standing on the stage together with some other directors and producers and answering questions from the audience. Without a doubt, he, the man in blue jeans, was the youngest among them all. To tell the truth, his appearance looked a little bit like an ordinary American farmer. I remember he said he appreciated Kung-fu movies made in Hong Kong and he also mentioned some traditional Chinese novels. Anyway, in my eyes Tarantino is a pure genius. He is good at imitating others. Rather we could say he is good at using others' ideas for reference, then digesting them, and using the pith for nourishment. He is quick-minded and full of imagination. For him, anything, commercial elements, action movie elements, super-reality techniques, or anything else, can be put together in one movie. He is born for film, nothing else.

After the showing of ‘Pulp Fiction’, Tarantino came to our institute. He visited some dormitories, especially those of the Directing Department, and talked about films with students he had never met before. Since those discussions were held in the boys' dormitories, I did not attend. It was said they had coffee and dinner together later. That month, Tarantino, a man who is only few years older than us, but has rubbed shoulders with top international directors and has gained the laurel from the Cannes Film Festival, became a hot topic with all my schoolmates.

I believe all of us admired him. He seemed not too far away from us. But for us, there were huge and almost unconquerable mountains of video cameras in our long and tough journey to pursue our film dreams.

Finally the Sundance Movie Festival closed and some girls in the Directing Department told me Tarantino had left Beijing. Then I heard the news he had a new girl friend in the U.S. And then all the stories about him turned out to be bamboo telegraphs of Hollywood. He got away from our lives.

(abstract)



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Russian Intensity Permeates Grand Opening

By Zhu Lin

The Great Hall of the People was filled with noble and passionate Russian air on the night of October 15 at the Grand Opening of the Fourth Beijing Music Festival. Not using a baton, Yuri Temirkanov, conductor of the Saint Petersburg Philharmonic Orchestra, conquered the audience with his expressive hands. "I want so much to dance!" cheered beaming college student Zhang Jie after the concert.

This was the first time the Beijing Music Festival offered a gala of short pieces at its opening. The effect came off exceptionally well. 'Festival Overture', the first piece written

by Shostakovich, went perfectly with the lively atmosphere of the concert. When Sergei Gershenko, the violin soloist, played Glazunov's grand adagio from 'Raymonda', the seductive rhythm springing in golden tone color gave the concert intensity earlier than expected. "I felt like I'd returned to my childhood when I learnt piano at Shenyang Conservatory of Music," reflected middle-aged Wang Huailu when she heard the familiar melody in 'Waltz of the Flowers' from 'Nutcracker'.

Photo by Qian Bingge

The most thrilling was the last piece of the program, 'Death of Tibalt', the selection from 'Romeo and Juliet' by Prokofiev. The suffocating, tragic atmosphere spreads up to the sky under Temirkanov's typical Russian interpretation. It was so dense that the audience had to wait a second to catch their breath at the end. Then deafening applause burst out.

On the days that follow, other highlights include Philip Glass' cello concerto, Canadian Brass, Chinese composer Tan Dun's experimental works and a concert dedicated to the birth centenary of Spanish composer Joaquin Rodrigo. By the time the Beijing Music Festival closes in November, 1500 musicians from 14 countries will have participated in 30 concerts.



Photo by Zhuang Jian

Drums and Sax Poised for Jazz Festival

By Wang Baoling

The Beijing International Jazz Festival will light up Beijing's stage at the Century Theatre from November 16 to 18. Jazz fans may enjoy a musical feast with performances from six bands during the three days.

The festival will kick off on November 16 with Dianne Reeves, one of the brightest stars in international jazz circles. Rabih Abou-Khalil and the band 'Vital Information' will perform the next day. On the last day, music from Roy Hargrove and 'Lennart Aberg Trio' will wrap up the festival. Some of the bands will also perform in Shanghai on November 17 and 18. In order to make the 2001 International Jazz Festival the best of its history, Liu Yuan, the first Chinese jazz musician, is invited to serve as its general director.

Since 1993 the Beijing International Jazz Festival has been a world-renowned jazz festival. It was extended to Shanghai, Guangzhou and Dalian in 1996 and 1997.



Jazz musician Roy Hargrove

Korean 'Line One' Livens up Chinese Drama Circles

By Zhu Lin

A prostitute committing suicide, a drunkard pissing in a subway, vane old widows, aggressive businessmen, neurotic beggars...nearly 80 roles performed by 11 actors and actresses portrayed the daily life of Seoul's working classes in the rock musical 'Line One'. During performances at the China Children's Theatre from October 13 to 17, Chinese audiences have been amazed by the high quality of the musical.

'Fairy', a naive ethnic Korean girl from China comes to Seoul in search of 'Swallow', a gigolo she fell in love with. She encounters the vanity and desperation of various kinds of people in Seoul while riding the subway 'Line One'. Although the musical is adapted from German writer Volker Ludwig's

'Line 1—Das Musikal', Kim Min-gi, the director and producer, theatre icon in Korea, has revised it perfectly to fit Seoul's background. It's almost like an original work.

The music is a success of localizing Western artistic elements. Jazz, rock music and classical music are all used in the composition, but they go with the Korean language so naturally. 'Glasses' is a hypocrite taken for the leader of the student movement by a prostitute who falls in love with him. When he confesses after the prostitute's suicide, the music turns to rap. "I didn't expect the music for this part would be rap," said Wang Qi, a college student, "since usually when somebody is in a mood like this, the music should be slow. But after listening, I find it's suitable for the role's character and condition."

The musical has already been per-

formed over 1200 times around the world, including 1000 performances in Korea since its debut in 1994. "The Korean audience laughed on average every 10 seconds throughout the performance," recalled Kim.

Such a success really spurs on Chinese drama circles. No Chinese musical or drama has ever received such a strong welcome in China for the last 10 years. In renowned author Yu Hua's words, Kim's deep understanding of both Eastern and Western culture makes him stun. Yuan Hong, a drama producer said he was very impressed by 'Line One', "I feel pressure from its thrilling achievement," he said. Famous film director Stan Lai and drama director Yang Dechang both sing its praises. All their energy is now focused on creating a Chinese version of this spectacular combination of Western and Oriental modern art.

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Makye Ame -A beautiful story of ancient Tibet

By Hydie

Around three hundred years ago, there was a Tibetan chang house (bar) located in the southeast of Barkhor Street in the center of old Lhasa. One moonlit night, this chang house was visited by a mysterious man. He looked ordinary enough, but was by no means a commoner. On that night, a beautiful lady happened to visit this chang house also. Her beauty and purity impressed the man so much that her face appeared again and again in his dreams. From that night on, the man visited the chang house frequently, hoping to see the lady once more. However, she never appeared there again.

This story comes from a well-known poem in Tibet, said to be written by that mysterious man in his reminiscing about the lady. The mysterious man often dressed as an ordinary person and left the Potala Palace to experience the life and emotions of the common people. He also shouldered an important mission: he was entrusted by the Bodhisattva in a dream to seek the Imperial Goddess. The Imperial Goddess usually appeared in the guise of a beautiful woman, and Tsangyang Gyalto's footprints were left all over Tibet in his search for her.

The term Makye Ame comes from the poem of Tsangyang Gyalto. Makye means "not born" or "not stained", which can be interpreted as "holy", "perfect", or "pure". Ame is the preposition of Ama, meaning "mother". In the aesthetic understanding of the Tibetans, mother is the embodiment of all that is beautiful in women. Makye Ame can mean holy mother, or can be interpreted as "beautiful ancient dream".

The chang house where Tsangyang Gyalto met the lady, perhaps the incarnation of the Imperial Goddess, was named Makye Ame Restaurant to commemorate Tsangyang Gyalto. Makye Ame Restaurant has recently set up a branch near Ritan Park, a delightful place to sample some authentic Tibetan food and culture. And you just never know who you might meet there. . .

Recommended: 1.Tibetan Roasted Rib of Lamb (Indian style homemade sauce, served in traditional style with Tibetan knife. Worth trying!) 2. Jasidele (Beef braised in brown sauce with carrots and yak marrow topped with cheese) 3. Tibetan Roasted Natural Mushroom 4. Chicken Tandoori (Chicken roasted in clay oven, very special) 5.Juoma-Jesi (Juoma, a special Tibetan crop mixed with raisins and rice). 6. Tsampa Dumplings (Made from Tibetan barley and butter).

Add: 2F, Xiushuinanjie Bar Street (north of the Friendship Store), Jianguomenwai Dajie. **Tel:** 6506 9616. **Open:** 11am - 2am.

Makye Ame Restaurant - Lhasa

Add: Southeast Corner, Barkhor Street, Lhasa, Tibet. **Tel:** 0891-6324455. **Open:** 8:30 am - midnight.

What's your favorite shop or stand? We will be very happy to share your experience with all our readers and don't forget, a mystery gift is waiting for you if we print your story. Please contact us at 65902524 or 13910916642. Email: jianrong@ynet.com.



By Lydia

Have you dreamed of the African continent? Have you heard the sounds from that mysterious, faraway land? Now you can experience for yourself the genuine African culture and art.

Touch Africa has been open for just a few weeks. Step into the exquisitely decorated store and you will find yourself on a marvelous trip to Africa. Masks, headdresses, wooden sculptures, decorated staffs, almost any kind of African handicraft you can imagine line the walls and shelves. On one wall hang masks and headdresses used in celebrations and rituals, such as the traditional dances performed at planting time, to honor the mythical "farming animal" that taught agriculture to the ancestors, or to welcome the birth of a baby. In all these works, there are always hints of stories that tell the endless mystery of Africa.

The owner of the store, Mr. Cheng,

a graduate from art school, speaks good English and will introduce all sorts of interesting aspects of African culture. There are also plenty of books, pamphlets and magazines.

All the items on sale are collected by the owner of the store during his frequent travels in Africa. They range in price from 18 to tens of thousands of yuan, from simple bands to huge wooden totems. As Cheng says, "I'd like more and more people to get to know and appreciate African culture and art." In the near future, Cheng plans to open an African bar and hold some exhibitions in Beijing.

Attention: Any African students who are interested in working at this shop, and in introducing African culture, contact Mr. Cheng. **Add:** 18 Chaowaidajie, B1 Fullink Plaza, bus 112, 109 to Chaowaidajie or subway to Chaoyangmen. **Open:** 10am-8pm. **Tel:** 65884633. **Web:** http://touchafrica.yeah.net.



Photos by Chen Shuyi

Experiencing War

By Priscilla

For all the bad press it gets, war has provided a setting for innumerable great movies, books, art, and even songs. Now it provides the inspiration for one of Beijing's newest bars. Nameless Highland Bar takes as its theme World War Two and China's War of Liberation.



Situated in the north of Beijing, Nameless Highland opened in September. The first floor of the two-story bar is kind of tough and macho in style; the second floor is little more laid back, slightly more conducive chatting with friends. Wood is the predominant material, and there are all sorts of bits and pieces of military type communications equipment placed strategically about, such as radios, transmitters, field telephones and so on. You will also find items like fire extinguishers, water bottles, musical instruments of the army band, helmets, maps, etc. and so on. On the second floor, a shelf filled with old books dating back about 50 years or so, is displayed near the stairs. Walking along the hallway, you'll find many old Chinese war posters hanging on the wall. The waiters and waitresses, resplendent in American military uniforms, complete the picture.

When you go into the bar for the first time, you will get a pass, and your rank will be general. In fact, the card records your consumption, and when it reaches a certain amount, you can get a free gift (perhaps a used hand grenade?).

The owner, who has studied design, is a collector of all things related to war, and has designed a series of posters for the bar following this theme, that customers can collect. Every night, western war movies with Chinese subtitles are screened and live music starts from 9:30pm.

Add: 1 Area, Anhuili, Yayuncun, go east from Yan huang Art Gallery, turn right at the first corner then go on for 300m, it's on the right. **Open:** 4pm-2am. **Tel:** 64891613.

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By Dan Dan

Over the next several weeks, Beijing Today will introduce some typical traps to beware of, in order to make the process of purchasing an apartment a little less fraught with danger.

The most direct way for a consumer to gain information about houses and apartments for sale is by reading newspaper advertisements.

The following are a few things to watch for:

Trap one: location

Location is the most important aspect. Real estate advertisements usually show the location with a sketch map.

If the location is not so good, developers sometimes resort to various tricks to lure the customers.

Ads often state that the property is x miles from y, or x minute's drive to z. 'x' might be as the crow flies, but nothing to do with the actual distance by road.

As for the 'x' minute's drive, the time may well be possible; at four am, breaking all speed limits. During the day, you might not be able to get even halfway down the block in that time, due to constant traffic jams.

Countermeasure: You need to check such claims for yourself, to see if they are realistic.

Trap two: price

Prices can vary considerably for apartments of the same size and in the same building, depending on what floor they are on and which direction they face. Most developers

It is a happy occasion to move into a new house, whether it's here in Beijing or in your own hometown.

However, before that day comes, there are many long and involved procedures to go through. The battle of wits between customers and developers started on the very day of the appearance of the real estate industry. During all these procedures, customers must be very alert to the various traps laid by some of the more unscrupulous developers. If you lack purchasing experience and believe everything a developer tells you, you are asking for trouble!

Purchasing trap, advertisement



would prominently display the lowest price for the worst floor location or aspect in the advertisement. But the price you have to pay is much higher.

Generally speaking, you have no

opportunity to get the lowest price apartment, as they have already been reserved.

Countermeasure: Find out the average price and get more price and sale information from the sales person.

Trap three: reputation

Customers often take the reputation of the developer as a reference point.

However, the reliability of the investors and the construction company must also be taken into consideration.

The three aspects are not always of the same standard, and a quality developer does not necessarily guarantee a quality investor or construction company.

Countermeasure: Thoroughly check the backgrounds of all the companies involved in the project.

Trap four: fake licenses

Only developers with a "presales license" are permitted to advertise in newspapers, and the license number must appear in the ad.

However, there was a case of a developer using a false property license some time ago, and fake Presales Licenses are a possibility.

Countermeasure: Confirm with relevant department that the license is valid.

Tel: 65124104

Property management charges to be regulated

By Dan Dan

In a move to standardize property management charges, the Beijing Municipal Government has required the Property Management Department of the Beijing Real Estate Bureau to formulate an "Ordinance on Beijing Property Management Charges".

The ordinance will be sent to the People's Congress next year for approval. Meanwhile, "Measures on property management charges of Beijing apartments", drawn up in March this year, will be issued in the fourth quarter of this year.

The measures on property management charges identify three categories of charges: public service charges, public commission charges and specially reserved service charges. Public service charges, paid by the apartment owner, will be set at five levels, based on the facilities available locally and services offered by the property management company. The other two charges will be paid by the consignor and the rate will be decided according to the market.

Currently, property management fees for ordinary and top-level apartments come under the guidelines, "Temporary measures on property management charges of common apartments", published by the Beijing Real Estate Bureau in 1997 and "Temporary measures on property management charges of top-level apartments", published in 1998.

According to the temporary measures for top-level apartments; property management charges will be determined by the market, under the agreement of the relevant property management committee and company.

The charges for property management, according to the Ministry of Construction, are determined according to the following: salaries of the property management staff; maintenance, tree planting, cleaning, security and administration fees; depreciation of fixed assets, and taxes.

Renting in the south

South Second Ring Road

By Dan Dan

Today, we look at apartment prices around the south Second Ring Road, from Changchunjie in the west to Dongbianmen in the east.

Changchunjie to Xuanwumen

Prices around here range from about 1,100 yuan for a simply decorated, fully furnished one-room apartment to 1,400 yuan for a two room and 1,800 yuan for a three room apartment.

Xuanwu Hospital is located nearby and there is a big department store, Sogo, at Xuanwumen. Living in this area is very convenient; everything is within reach.

Xuanwumen to Hepingmen

A simply decorated, fully furnished one room apartment costs around 1,200 yuan, two room, 1,500 yuan and three room 1,700 to 2,000 yuan. Hepingmen Post Office is located at the Hepingmen intersection. On the southern side of the street, there are numerous restaurants specializing in barbecue. They are among the most authentic BBQ restaurants in Beijing, but you need to make a reservation unless you want to stand in a very long queue.

Hepingmen to Qianmen

The average price for one room with simple decoration and full facilities is 1,300 yuan, two room 1,500 yuan and three room 1,900 yuan. This area is about as downtown as you can get in Beijing. Many government offices are nearby, such as the Beijing Security Bureau. No security problems at all! As for shopping, dining, sporting and many other leisure activities, this is among the best locations in Beijing.

Qianmen to Chongwenmen

A one room apartment costs around 1,500 yuan, two room 1,800 yuan and three room 2,000 yuan. The New World Center is located on the southern side of Chongwenmen intersection. Chongwenmen Market, famous for quality vegetables and fruit is right on your doorstep, as is Tongren Hospital, possibly the top hospital in China. Traffic is a problem, especially around Chongwenmen intersection, but you can always take the subway.

Chongwenmen to Dongbianmen

The average price for one room with simple decoration and full facilities is 1,100 yuan, two room 1,400 yuan and three room 1,700 yuan. This area is better than others around the south Second Ring Road in terms of traffic. Living facilities are also good, and it is very close to Jianguomen.

Beijing
Homehelp

Do you have any problems with your daily living such as housework, maintenance or home decorations? You try to find an appropriate housemaid (Ayi) but failed because of language barrier.

For the following editions, we are going to present a series of relevant numbers to help you solve the problem.

When the reporter phoned these companies they all promise that the same price applies to foreigners and local people, but if you feel you are over charged, please inform us and we will investigate.

By Dan Dan

Beijing Women Career Service Center

Add: No.8East Shun Street, Chongwen District. Tel: 65123991

10 yuan per hour, at least 2 hours per time, with a little English

Shi Jing Shan Old City Sino Service Agent

Add: Old City in Shijingshan District
Tel: 68878685 68843625

10 yuan per hour, at least 2 hours per time, with a little English.

Feng Tai Women & Children Training Center

Add: No.9 Building Fang Garden, Dachengle Inhabitancy Green Tower, Feng Tai District
Tel: 68675149

6 yuan per hour, but it is suggested to have at least 4 hours per time or they would be reluctant to come, with a little English.

Beijing Cheng Wai Cheng Service Center

Add: Fang Zhuang, Feng Tai District
Tel: 67697682

6 yuan per hour, at least 2 hours per time.

Beijing Five-ring Good-helper Service Department

Add: White-tower Temple, Xicheng District
Tel: 66065380

5 yuan per hour, at least 2 hours per time, with a little English.



Beijing International Youth Hostel

By Dan Dan

The Beijing International Youth Hostel, an accredited member of the International Youth Hostel Association aims to satisfy the hospitality and communication needs of young travelers from all over the world. Located in Chang'an Avenue, the hostel is situated on the 10th floor of block 2, Beijing International Hotel.

It is just 600 meters from Beijing Railway Station and there is a shuttle bus service for the Capital Airport and Beijing West Railway Station. Facilities include self-catering dining room, reading room, games room, laundry and shop. It has a central air-conditioning system, 24 hours hot water. There are 2-8 beds per room.

Beijing
Hotel

How to get there: From Beijing Railway Station, it's a 10 minute walk to the hostel. From Beijing West Railway Station, take the hostel shuttle bus.

Price For Youth Hostel members: 2-person room - 80 yuan/per bed per night; 4-person room - 60 yuan/per bed per night; 8-person room - 50 yuan/per bed per night. Non-members: 2-person room - 70 yuan/per bed per night; 4-person room - 70 yuan/per bed per night; 8-person room - 60 yuan/per bed per night.

Membership Card: Adult - 60 yuan/per person, student - 40 yuan/per person. Term of validity: one year.
Tel: 65126688-6145, 6146
Fax: 65229494.



Pictures by Liu Yang

Guest
Quiz

Target: Beijing Hotel
When: 16:30-18:50, Monday, October 15th
Hotel Detective: Wang Dandan

Charlie Greenwood, Britain

I was required to live here by my company. Probably they have some company contract. It is good, and they redecorated it several months ago. But the staff here are not so flexible as in other hotels, probably because this is a state-owned hotel.

Natalie Slenova, Russia

It is good. I like the hotel, especially the bread in the restaurant. It is a little bit like bread in my country. I am used to living here because I am familiar with all the facilities nearby, like the Wangfujing Shopping Street. I even know which floor sells shoes in Sun Dong An Shopping Center!

Denk Puvak, Romania

I like to be close to something with great

history and I know this hotel is one of the longest hotels in Beijing, and it was established early last century. The different culture of the east and the west converges right here in the center of Beijing. Most other modern hotels do not have such a style.

"HOUSING" welcomes your feedback: What kind of difficulties do you encounter when looking for housing in Beijing? What kind of information do you need? What can we help you with?

Our E-mail: jianrong@ynet.com
Tel: 65902522
Fax: 65902525

Music

Beijing Music Festival

1) Mahler Symphony No. 2 (Resurrection) Orchestra & Chorus of National Opera Warsaw. **Conductor:** Krzysztof Penderecki. **When:** Saturday, October 20, 7:30pm. **Admission:** 100-480 yuan, 280-1000 yuan box.

2) Philip Glass Cello Concerto World Premiere Cello: Julian Lloyd Webber. China Philharmonic Orchestra, Conductor: Yu Long. **When:** Sunday, October 21, 7:30pm. **Admission:** 100-480 yuan, 280-1000 yuan box.

3) Vladimir Ashkenazy with Czech Philharmonic Orchestra: Mozart's Piano Concerto No. 27 in B-flat major; Debussy, La Mer; Ravel, La Valse. **When:** Tuesday, October 23, 7:30pm. **Admission:** 180-680 yuan, 480 - 1,000 yuan box.



4) Smetana: Ma Vlast Performed by the Czech Philharmonic Orchestra; **conductor:** Vladimir Ashkenazy. **When:** Wednesday, October 24, 7:30pm. **Admission:** 180-680 yuan, 1,000 yuan box

5) The Night of Glenn Gould - Hi-Fi Concert Bach: Goldberg Variations, Glenn Gould Greatest Hits, Thirty-Two Short Films about Glenn Gould. **When:** Thursday, October 25, 7:30pm. **Admission:** 30-100 yuan.



6) Crouching Tiger & Hidden Dragon on Fervor China Philharmonic Orchestra; **Conductor:** Tan Dun. Concerto for Water Percussion and Orchestra, Crouching Tiger Concerto. **When:** October 26, 7:30pm. **Admission:** 180-580 yuan, 380-1,000 yuan box.

Where: Poly Plaza, 14 Dongzhimen

Nandajie, bus 115 or subway to Dongsishitiao.

Tel: 65071890 (English)



Concert for Public Welfare

Starring Zhang Xinzhe, a famous pop singer from Taiwan. Special guest Xu Huaiyu is also from Taiwan. **Where:** Beijing Workers' Stadium, Chaoyang District, bus 113, 115, 118 to Gongti. **When:** October 27, 7:30pm. **Admission:** 60-380 for stands, 280-800 for the infield. **Tel:** 67123358.

Jazz by Touchstone Band **Where:** Beijing Concert Hall, 1 Beixinhuajie, Liubukou, West Chang'an Avenue. **When:** Saturday, October 20, 7:30pm. **Admission:** 10-30 yuan. **Tel:** 66057006.



Top Show

The first series performance of Top Show will feature rock 'n' roll band Overload (Chao Zai). **Where:** 2F Henderson Center, 18 Jianguomennei Dajie, East Chang'an Avenue. **When:** Saturday, October 20, 3pm. **Tel:** 65183260.

Music at Get Lucky

Bands include Mai Zi, Shi Po, Mu Tui Gua, Cold-blooded animals, Bu Yi, An Shi. **Where:** Get Lucky Bar, Taiyanggong, east of south gate of Duiwaijing-mao. **When:** Friday, Saturday, October 19 and 20, 9pm. **Admission:** 30 yuan, 20 yuan for students. **Tel:** 64299109.

Performances

5th China International Folk Arts Festival The art troupes from Mongolia, Russia, Egypt, Korea, South Africa, Georgia and Moldova will perform in Beijing. The closing ceremony will be on October 28, all together 6 art troupes. **When:** October 26-28 7:30pm. **Where:** Minority Cultural Palace Theater (民族宫大剧院), 49 Fuxingmennei Dajie, inside the Minzu Hotel, West Chang'an Avenue, Xicheng District. **Tel:** 66059881.

Dramas at Mini Theaters

The First Half Career of A Man by Liaoning Art Troupe. **When:** October 21, 7:15pm, October 22, 2:30pm, 7:15pm. *Escort* by Guangzhou Drama Troupe. **When:** October 23-26, 7:15pm. **Where:** Mini Theater of People's Art Theater, 22 Wangfujing Dajie, Dongcheng District. **Tel:** 65250123. *The Memories of Summer* by Tianjin People's Art Troupe. **Where:** Mini Theater of China Youth Art Theater, 200 meters into Beibing-masi Hutong. **Tel:** 64075959.

1st China Acrobatics Festival - Closing Ceremony

Where: Beijing Workers' Stadium, west of Sanlitun, Chaoyang District. **When:** Friday, October 26, 7:30pm. **Admission:** 50-580 yuan. **Tel:** 65102173, 55670850, 65952485.

Night of Modern Beijing Opera

Where: National Library Concert Hall, 33 Zhongguancun Nandajie, Haidian District. **When:** Saturday, October 20, 7:30pm. **Admission:** 30-120 yuan. **Tel:** 68485462.

Restaurants & Bars

Bamboo Garden Coffee Shop Mouthwatering South-East Asian Buffet, 108 yuan +15% service charge (including one glass of soft drink or beer). As special buffet opening offer, the third person in your party eats for free (three for the price of two)! **Where:** 1F, Beijing New Century Ho-

International Schools

Beijing BISS International School Founded in 1994, the school serves the expanding Beijing expatriate community's need for international education. The school is a non-profit, co-educational English-language school, currently offering classes from kindergarten to year 12. BISS is the first International School licensed by The Beijing Educational Commission, an associate member of the European Council of International Schools (ECIS) and is accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC). **Add:** Building 17, Area 4, Anzhenxili, Chaoyang District. **Tel:** 64433151/2/3. Fax: 64433156. **Website:** www.biss.com.cn/company/biss/main.html

International School of Beijing

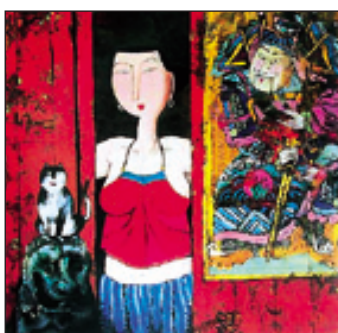
Today, ISB is a fully accredited, private, non-sectarian, co-educational, college preparatory day school with classes conducted in English for children from pre-kindergarten

through to year 12. **Add:** Building 7, Lido Complex, Ji Chang lu, Chaoyang District. **Admissions Officer:** Mimi Lam **Tel:** 8610-6437-6688 ext. 1242. **Fax:** 8610-6437-6989.

Email: admissions@isb.bj.edu.cn



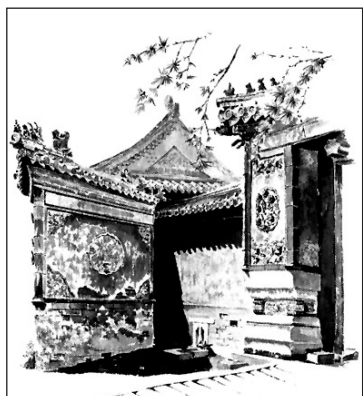
Exhibitions



Twentieth Century Masterworks of Chinese Paintings - Contemporary Collection Tour Exhibition Works by Chen Baiyi, Ma Xiguang, Shi Qi, Yang Yanwen, etc. **Opening:** October 20, 3:30-5:30pm. Lecture by Guo Haoman, founder of Wan Fung Gallery: October 21, 3-5pm. Please make reservations in advance. **Where:** Wan Fung Gallery, 136 Nanchizi Dajie, Dongcheng District. **When:** October 20 - November 4. **Admission:** free. **Tel:** 65233320.



2001 Oil Paintings Exhibition by Xiao Feng An exhibition of light and shadow. The artist's simple expressive style shows his ideas and spirits, and leaves wide space for imagination. **Where:** Creation Gallery, north end of Ritandonglu, Chaoyang District, outside the northeast corner of Ritan Park. **Opening:** October 20, 3-7pm. **When:** October 20 - November 1, 10am-7pm. **Admission:** free. **Tel:** 65067570.



Chinese Ink & Wash Paintings by French Artist Charles Chauderlot

His recent painted works feature the Sihayuan courtyard houses of old Beijing and the city's architecture and temples. **Where:** Hualai Gallery, 74 Donghuamen Dajie, Dongcheng District. **When:** October 20-30. **Admission:** free. **Tel:** 65238128.

Feng Feng Oil Painting Exhibition He has joined many solo exhibitions and group exhibitions home and abroad, and works have been collected by British Reuters, Swiss Bank, Ger-

man Librer Company, the Australia Embassy, etc. The Opening Reception: October 20, 3-7pm. During this exhibition, all framing is discounted by 10%. **Where:** Qin Gallery, 38 A Fangcaodi Beijie, Chaoyang District. **When:** October 19-31, 9:30am-7pm. **Tel:** 65074062.



Digital Ghosts - A Multi Media Exhibition of Five Australian Contemporary Artists The five artists are Karen Casey, Jill Orr, Tony Scott, Sally Gray, Astrid Spielman. Their works are both separate and connected, and are informed by travel between cultures and by the shadows and fragility of surfaces. Much of the work is playful. **Opening reception:** Saturday, October 20, 3-5pm. **Where:** Redgate Gallery, Level 1 & 4, Dongbianmen Watchtower, south of Jianguomen, Dongcheng District. **When:** October 20-28, 10am-5pm, closed on Sunday & Monday. **Tel:** 65251005.



Japanese Kimono and Clothing Exhibition

Where: Yan Huang Art Museum, 9 Huizhonglu, Chaoyang District, diagonally opposite Beicheng Shopping Center. **When:** till October 28, 9am-4pm. **Admission:** 5 yuan. **Tel:** 64912902.

Exhibition of paintings on the theme of folk customs in Switzerland and rural China

Where: East Hall of Beijing Working People's Cultural Palace, bus 1, 4, 10, 57 or subway to Tian'anmen East. **When:** till Sun. **Tel:** 65052288.

28th China International Carpet Trade Exhibition

Where: 16 Dongsanhuan Beilu, National Agriculture Museum. **When:** till Sat. **Tel:** 65018877.

2001 Beijing International Art Books Fair

Where: Beijing International Book Store, 91 Xisanhuan Beilu, northwest of Huayuanqiao Bridge, Haidian District. **When:** till Sun. **Tel:** 68433204.

Beijing 2001 International Coin Fair

Where: China World Trade Center, bus 1, 4, 57, 402, 113, 28 or subway to Dabeyao. **When:** Oct 26, 27, 28. **Tel:** 65253113.

German Restaurant

Original German specialties from various regions of Germany, prepared by German chef. Happy hour: 5pm-7pm. **Where:** 3rd floor Landmark Hotel, Chaoyang District. **Tel:** 65906688 ext. 5333.

Movies

Farewell 1948

Chinese movie with English subtitles. Director: Guan Hu, starring Zhu Yuanyuan; 2000, 105 minutes. The story begins in 1948 in Beijing as the PLA forces surround the city and Nationalist troupes are preparing for an attack. **Where:** Cherry Lane Movies, Sino-Japanese Youth Exchange Center, Intl Conference Hall, 40 Liangmaqiaolu, 1km east of Kempinski Hotel. **When:** Friday, October 25, 8pm. **Admission:** 50 yuan. **Tel:** 64615318/9.



Korean Movie - Green Fish

Produced by East Film, Directed by Lee Chang Dong, Starring Han Shikui, Hyea Jin. **Where:** 5F, Hyundai Millennium Tower (现代盛世大厦), 38 Xiaoyunlu, Chaoyang District. **When:** Friday, October 19, 5:30pm. **Admission:** free. **Tel:** 84538112/3/4.

War Movies Monday: 7-9:30pm, Sword Fish, 0-2am, Waterloo Bridge; Tuesday, Mission Impossible, Rambo (1); Wednesday, The Score, Rambo (2); Thursday, Full Metal Jacket, Gladiator; Friday, Enemy at the Gates, Pearl Harbor; Saturday, The Bridge on the River Kwai, Saving Private Ryan; Sunday, U-571, Rambo (3). **Where:** Nameless Highland Bar (无名高地酒吧), 1 Area, Anhuili, Yayuncun, go east 500 m from Yanhuang Art Gallery, turn right at the first corner, then walk 300 m. **Tel:** 64891613.

Course & Lecture

Modern Dance Training Class

Beijing Modern Dance Troupe's Modern Dance Workplace was such a success that a further course by Yin Aimin and Gao Yanjinzi will be held. Sign up by October 25. Course starts from October 27, 3-5pm, and will run for three months. **Where:** 4F, Beijing Opera Rehearsal Theater (北京戏校排练场), 8 Majiapu Dongli (马家堡东里), Fengtai District. **Tel:** 67587161, 67586513. **Fax:** 67580922. Contact Bao Weihua.

The Status of Art - Lecture by Boris Groys One of the most renowned theorists on modern art and culture will discuss the realistic problems with artistic scholars. **Where:** Goethe Institute Beijing, Weigongcunlu Xikou, opposite the south gate of Beijing Ligong Daxue. **When:** October 26, 6:30pm. **Tel:** 68417891.



Sports & Activities

Meet famous composer Tan Dun

Tan Dun, the composer of Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon, will sign his albums, including Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon; Heaven Earth & People. **Where:** Clavichord Cafe (古钢琴咖啡屋), 111-114 B Tower, COFCO Plaza, 8 Jianguomennei Dajie. **When:** October 25, 4:30-5:30pm. **Tel:** 65264145.

Super Football Fans? The Club Football Bar, Beijing's pace-setting football theme bar & restaurant. Big Screen. Fri: Asian World cup qualifier Uzbekistan vs China, 9:30 pm; Sun: English Premiership Newcastle United vs Tottenham, 8:50 pm; English Premiership Leeds United vs Chelsea, 23 pm. All live!

Weather

Friday
October 19

Cloudy to clear
Max: 21C. Min: 10C.

Saturday
October 20

Cloudy to clear
Max: 18C. Min: 12C.

Sunday
October 21

Clear
Max: 21C. Min: 11C.

Monday
October 22

Clear
Max: 19C. Min: 6C.

Tuesday
October 23

Clear to cloudy
Max: 19C. Min: 8C.

Wednesday
October 24

Cloudy
Max: 18C. Min: 7C.

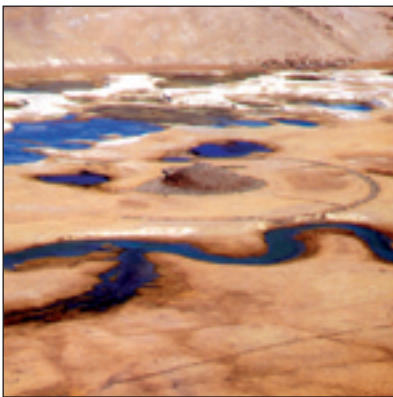
Thursday
October 25

Cloudy
Max: 16C. Min: 7C.



We are glad to receive your feedback. If you need any help in your life, you can email us at bjtodayinfo@ynet.com or call 65902522

By Priscilla / Lydie



The largest of the stone piles is believed to be the tomb of a headman of the Sai tribe. There is an artificial lake around the pile, said to have been constructed to protect the tomb.



This carving depicts a wild boar, an ox and a goat being drawn into a strange ring shaped object. Perhaps a UFO?



This mysterious looking figure guarded a tomb belonging to a member of an ancient tribe.



This carving depicts two goats mating. It is the work of members of a tribe that inhabited the region some 2,500 years ago.

Chinawide

In a quiet valley in the remote Altai mountains of Xinjiang, lie 50 enormous stone piles. The stone piles bear an uncanny resemblance to the famous 'crop circle' found in England, according to a staff member of the Xinjiang Museum. An English 'expert' on crop circles concurs.

By Wang Chen

The fifty stone piles lie in a remote valley in Altai Mountains. Aoshi (敖石), as it is known to the locals, is the biggest. 22 meters high and 92 meters in diameter, it is made of scores of stone plates. According to the locals, it is the tomb of Ghenghis Khan.

There are two stone circles surrounding the stone pile. The inner circle is 7 meters wide and the outer one is 5 meters wide, with a diameter of 700 meters. Four stone paths link the inner and outer circles, each one 70 meters in length and 3 meters in width.

Viewed from the mountain nearby, the stone pile, the inner and outer circles and the paths form a pattern resembling the famous crop circles in England. Seven stone steles can also be found around the stone pile.

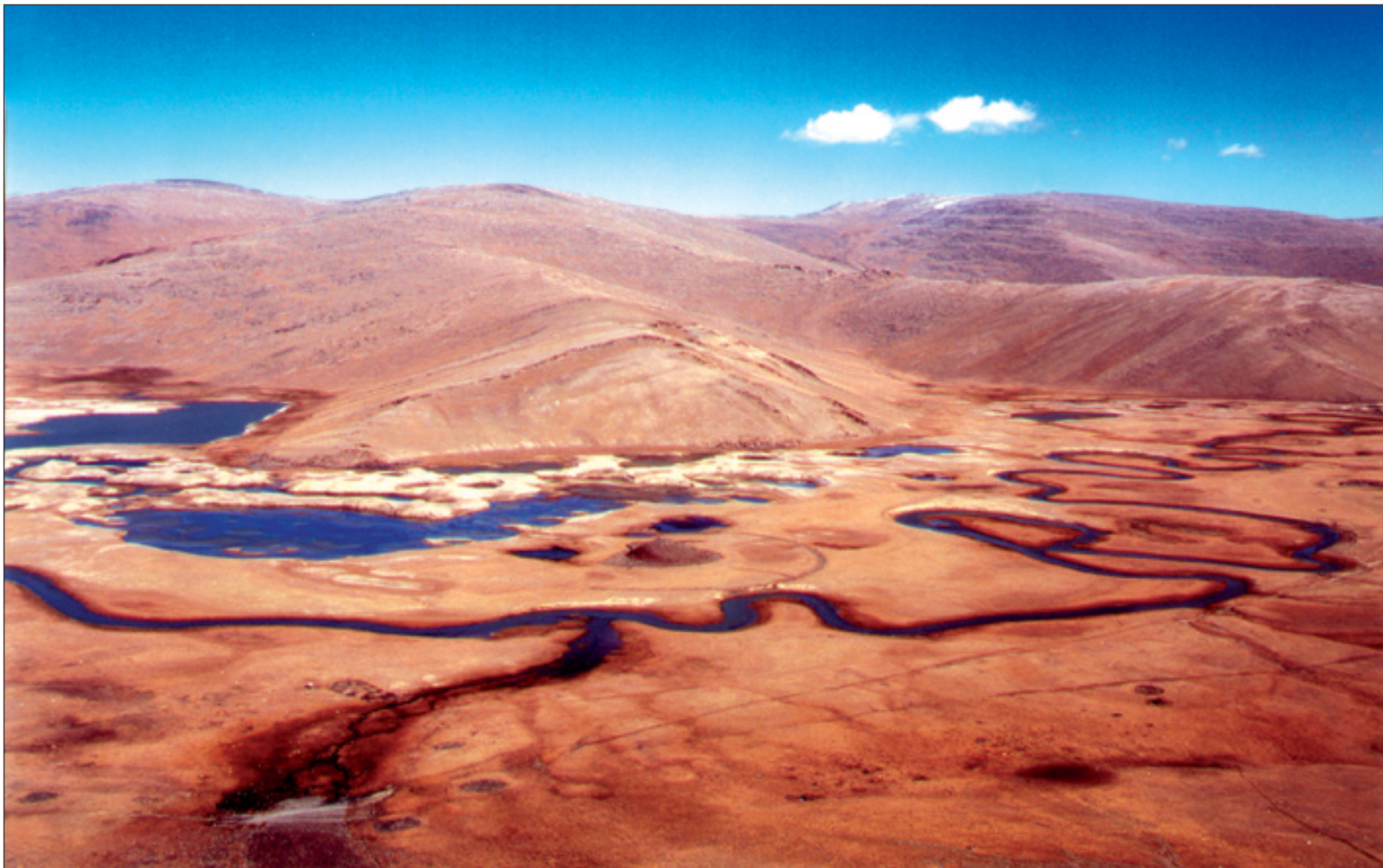
The stone pile is actually a tomb. According to the style of the tomb and the inscriptions on the steles, archaeologists conclude that it is the tomb of a headman of the Sai tribe, which prospered some 3,000 years ago.

Numerous animal bones found in the mountains nearby support this conclusion. Animals were generally used in sacrifices to the gods in Sai funerals.

However, there may well be more to these stone piles than just a tomb. Every visitor might draw their own conclusion. If you visit Xinjiang, you should definitely stop at these stone wonders to see for yourself.

How to get there: the stone piles are located in Altai Mountains of Qinghe County (青河县), Xinjiang; Take a train to Urumqi, capital of Xinjiang (60 hours), or fly (3 hours); then take a bus to Qinghe County (6 hours). There you can hire a car and a driver who will guide through the region for 500 yuan per day.

Mysterious Stone Piles



Bird's eye view of the stone piles

Photos by Wang Chen

Buddhist carvings in the valley

By Williams

These mysterious carvings on a huge rock at the bottom of the valley near Jietai Temple are rarely visited. There are a total of 22 relief carvings of Buddhas and two statues here.

The 80-centimeter Buddhas featuring amiable expressions all sit on lotus blossoms. The pattern of these stone works is not complicated. The artisans set out to create a solemn atmosphere, and each carving works as part of an integrated whole, successfully serving the intended effect. Though simple, they feature surprisingly comprehensive details. The magical artifacts held by the Buddhas, the style of their hair, their various cassocks, their robes, gestures and the patterns of the decorations can all be made out.

You can climb higher to the top of the rock. There you will find a small, hidden stone chamber. The entrance to the chamber is about seventy centimeters high and fifty centimeters wide. It is very dark inside, and only a part of a mound is visible, but it is not possible to tell how deep it is. However you can crawl inside for a better look.

Two statues stand at the foot of the rock, their heads missing. The larger Buddha, standing in a shallow pit, is about 1.6 meters tall. The smaller one hides on the other side of the rock, leaning against the wall.

The carvings and statues were made in the Ming Dynasty, when the Jietai Temple was rebuilt. A pebble road predating the group leads to Jietai Temple for the disciples on their



Photo by Du Jialin

way to offer incense to Buddha.

Where: Shifo Village (石佛村), southeast of Jietai Temple, Mentougou District

How to get there:

By car: Stop at the sign for Jietai Temple on the mountain road, park your car on the open area on your right. There is a booth there, the owner of the booth can keep an eye on your car for you. Walk along the road towards Jietai Temple. Look to your left, you will see several pine trees. At the end of the row of pine trees you will find a small path, which you should follow. Ten minutes later you will come to a stone archway, in front of the archway is the pebble road leading to the carvings. The hike will take about forty minutes, and you will see some beautiful autumn scenery along the way.

By bus: Bus 931 from Pingguoyuan Subway Station to Jietai Temple; then follow the above directions.

Tips: Keep to the pebble road.

There is an open area in front of the large rock that makes a good spot for picnicking.

A stone stele detailing the history of the carvings can be found on the mountainside one kilometer to the west. Next to the stele is a large Chinese character Fo (Buddha 佛) carved into a rock.



Weekend at Pearl Lake

By Williams

Pearl Lake (珍珠湖) lies in the northwest of Yanchi County (雁翅镇), Mentougou District. It has functioned as a reservoir since 1961. Pearl Lake features a unique climate owing to its location deep in the Taihang Mountain region, and boasts Asia's longest railroad bridge.

Day 1 Get to the lake in the morning. The bus tour takes two and a half hours. Buy a ticket at the entrance to Zhuwocun Village (10 yuan per person). On the west bank of the lake you can find a strip of sand, ideal for a picnic in the sun, or for camping. You can rent a boat from the village, however it won't be cheap. At night, dine in the village; the price is quite reasonable and the shrimps and fish are recommended!

Day 2 In the morning, you can either go to climb the mountain, or if you prefer something more leisurely,

try fishing in the lake. After lunch in the village, walk to the bus stop to catch the bus back to the city. Alternatively, you can return by train. There is a railway station at Yanhecheng (沿河城). It's best to hire a car or a mini bus in the village for the trip to the railway station. The train will depart at five o'clock in the afternoon. The trip takes a little over two hours and costs five yuan, hardseat. You can also take a train going to Pearl Lake. Train 7115 leaves Beijing South Railway Station at 7:02am and gets to Yanhecheng at around 9:15am. However you'll then have to hike for three hours to get to the lake.

Where: west of Zhuwo Village (珠窝村), Yanchi County, Mentougou District

How to get there: bus 336 from Pingguoyuan Subway Station to Hetan (河滩), then bus to Zhaitang County (斋堂镇), and one more bus to Pearl Lake.

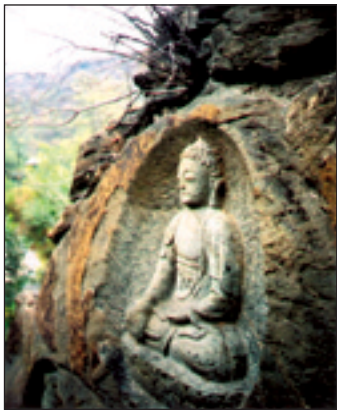


Photo by Du Jialin